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MATINS AND EVENSONG

BY THE

REV. CLEMENT F. ROGERS, M.A.

Professor of Pastoral Theology, King's College, University of London.

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Cavendum tamen, ne piger sis ad communia et ad singularia promptior; sed, expletis integre atque fideliter debitis et injunctis, si jam ultra vacat, redde te tibi, prout devotio tua desiderat.

(Thou must beware thou neglect not those prayers which ~~art enjoined and bound to do, if thou hast still time~~ are public, being more ready for but having fully and faithfully accomplished all that thou those which are art enjoined and bound to do, if thou hast still time private betake thee to thyself, as thy devotion calleth thee.)

THOMAS A KEMPIS: *Imitatio Christi*, Bk. I., Ch. xix.

PREFACE

What I have written here is based upon lectures given as Professor of Liturgical and Pastoral Theology to students at King's College University of London, on the second term of their first year of study. I have added rather full references, partly as a justification for my statements, but rather, as I give them in the class room, in hopes that they may serve as a guide to further reading. To these I have added three articles bearing on the subject of Common Prayer, which have already appeared elsewhere.

In each I have tried to establish the connexion of liturgical study and pastoral work, for I am convinced that it is by the study of what men have done in the past we shall learn what they need to-day. Human nature does not change, and the things of God remain always the same. There is much that needs reform in our public worship to-day; the Church of England has, I firmly believe, been given a great opportunity and been called to a great work among the nations, but reforms can only be safely carried out by those who have learned from the experience of ages, and imagination to see what might be done is illuminated by pondering on what men have done in other days.

CLEMENT F. ROGERS.

King's College Hostel,
Vincent Square,
S.W. 1.
June 19*th*, 1924.

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CHAPTER I.

THE ORIGINS OF DAILY COMMON PRAYER

If men were wholly left to their own voluntary meditations in their closets, and not drawn by laws and orders unto the open assemblies of the Church, that there they may join with others in prayer, it may be soon conjectured what Christian devotion that way would come into in a short time.

—HOOKER: *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book V., Ch. lxxii. §13.

WE in the Church of England have what no other Christians possess—a popular choir office, suitable also for private use. Nonconformists, like us, pray in the language of the people; their services are in the vernacular. But they are not liturgical; they have not the beauty of ordered form. Like the rest of the Church, our people worship at the altar, and alike in East and West, the Monastic Orders and Cathedral chapters have the Divine Office for solemn recitation in common. But in Latin Christendom the people cannot join in it. The Roman clergy have their breviaries for personal recitation, a book of private devotion perhaps unsurpassed. But its offices were, after all, meant to be sung in choir by a body of men; they cannot be fully appreciated unless sometimes at least so rendered. The English Church alone in her Matins and Evensong has a form suited for corporate worship in Cathedrals and Colleges; one that can serve for popular worship in parish churches, and one equally suitable for private use by individuals, clerical and lay.

This is an unique possession. We have a special opportunity, but we cannot say that we make the most of it. To speak frankly, the people in our parish churches are often simply bored by Matins on a

Sunday morning (though this is not the case with Evensong); they come from a sense of duty, but to the greater number it means very little; and they would never dream of coming on a week day. Except in our Cathedrals, the office is seldom rendered with any dignity, and even there the music and ceremonial has drifted far away from devotion, while very few use the book privately day by day.

All this calls for reform, but reform must be based on knowledge. The study of the past often throws light on the present. Let us look at the history of our Morning and Evening Prayer, and see what it teaches us.

I.

We study the past to collect the experience of men, for that gives its value to history. Especially is it important to study how things began, for in beginnings the instincts of men are seen in their simplest forms. Things lie there implicit which are gradually evolved to great results in the course of ages.

The difficulty, however, in the case of the Divine Office, is that there is so very little to go upon. Evidence for church matters of all sorts is scanty for the first three hundred years of the Church's life. But while in the case of the Eucharist we can trace fairly clearly the lines of development from the simple "breaking bread at home" to the full beauty and dignity of liturgical worship in the fourth century, in the case of the Hour Services we have only scattered and obscure allusions to guide us.

Consequently, various theories have been put forward, none of which is very easy to prove or to disprove; theories which may or may not be true, which, if true, are not necessarily inconsistent with each other. A suggestion which is picturesque and striking has been put forward by the brilliant French scholar, M. Pierre Batiffol, in his *History of the Roman Breviary*, published in 1892, and has been popularised by several English writers on the Prayer

Book. It is briefly as follows:—In the Early Church there was a vivid expectation of the speedy return of Christ, and this return popular belief looked for on the anniversary of His Resurrection. On Easter Eve, therefore, the Christian people watched all night lest coming, He should find them asleep. Now Sunday was regarded as a weekly Easter, so the all-night vigil was repeated each Saturday. But as the fervour of the first Christians declined, this was found too much, and the long watch was shortened. They met at sunset for a service, and went home, gathering together again at cock-crow, or at least before sunrise. In time the observance of this shortened vigil was extended to Wednesday and Friday, the station days—a military term—when the Eucharist was celebrated and the Christian army was called to be present as on parade.

The theory is attractive, but there is little to base it on. Was the belief so vivid, and the expectation so great? St. Paul's epistles do not seem to say so. The picture does not fit in with the glimpse we get in his letters of the state of things in the Corinthian church. Talk about "primitive fervour" is generally to be distrusted. Men in New Testament times were evidently very like men of to-day. We confuse human life and Church life. Man in youth is enthusiastic, but a youthful church has among its members those who are "midway in this our mortal life,"[1] and men patient with length of days. A church is still young when a hundred years old, but it has by then seen individuals test the emotions of first conversion, form habits, endure, and pass away. Besides, there is really no evidence whatever for this theory. What is quoted to support it dates from the fourth century, which also had its theories. By that time, vigils had long been held on special occasions, at martyrs' tombs and on the anniversaries of their deaths, and writers saw in the morning and evening services they were

[1] Dante Inf. I. 1.

familiar with some analogies to these gatherings. M. Batiffol only put his theory out as a suggestion; in the later editions of his book it has disappeared.[2]

There seems, however, to be this element of truth in it,—the service in its origin was closely connected with the Holy Communion. A more probable theory, therefore, is that of Mr. W. C. Bishop, who holds that it arose out of the preliminary preparation for the Eucharist, perhaps after the Agape or social meal the evening before, as well as from the more immediate preparation such as in later times formed a regular part of the liturgy known as the Mass of the Catechumens. This, as familiar both to baptised Christians and to others, would easily suggest a form of service for occasions when the Eucharist could not be celebrated. It is a natural instinct to pray twice a day and so two popular services grew up, at morning and evening, which lasted till they were superseded and suppressed by the monastic services arranged for the seven hours of the day and night.[3] But, whatever its exact origin may be, it is to be noted that the service will not be properly understood unless it is considered in connection with the Eucharist. A third theory is that the Divine Office was inherited from the Jews. In the Temple there were sacrifices daily, one in the morning, one in the afternoon, and one in the evening. In the synagogues these same hours were observed with offices of psalms and lessons which were regarded as an extension of the Temple services; they were sacrificial—in honour of God—not mere meetings for edification. These, it is argued, were continued by Christians till necessity in the shape of persecution compelled them to limit them to Sunday and to observe them at night. As persecution ceased they developed much as, Philo

[2] See *History of the Roman Breviary*. Mgr. Pierre Batiffol, Litt. D., tr. A.M.Y. Baylay from the third French edition (Longmans: 1912) pp. 1—2.

[3] *The Prayer Book Dictionary* (Pitman, 1912). Arts. *Psalter, Liturgical use of; Ante-Communion.*

tells us, the Therapeutæ, the Jewish ascetics of Egypt, organised their common worship night and morning.[4] This was the theory of Archdeacon Philip Freeman, put forward in his *Principles of Divine Service*, published in 1855,[5] and it has been adopted with modifications by many others since.[6]

If this theory is at all true, it will account for much. The observance of Sunday probably arose out of a continuation of the Sabbath evening devotions, for we must remember the first day of the week began on Saturday at sunset. It will account for much in the form of the service with its preponderance of the element of psalmody as well as for the lections and benedictions.[7] But the chief thing to notice is that, as far as the Jewish element contributed to the building up of Christian services, it put in the foreground the idea of worship with its accompaniments of solemn chanting and reading. It carried on a liturgical tradition. The synagogue, in spite of its name, was not a mere meeting house; it was a local substitute for the temple. This preserved the idea which later demanded beautiful churches and dignified bearing of singers and of ministers "lifting up their hands in the sanctuary and praising the Lord."

[4] Eusebius, who quotes Philo's account in his Ecclesiastical History, Bk. II., Ch. 17, which he wrote some 250 years after, believed them to be Christians, no doubt because he was familiar with Christian worship on similar lines.

[5] Ch. I. Lect. 3. Bp. J. Dowden in his *Further Studies in the Prayer Book* (Methuen, 1908), describes this work as "speculative and far from convincing" and says that it "cannot be regarded as having made any very sensible addition to our knowledge."

[6] See also P. Jackson in the *Prayer Book Dictionary*, Art. *Common Prayer*. F. E. Warren, *Liturgy and Ritual of the Ante-Nicene Church* (S.P.C.K., 2nd Ed. 1912), Ch. IV., pp. 201 and 219. A. Fortescue, *The Mass* (Longmans' Westminster Library, 1912) Ch. I., §8, pp. 70—75. "That the first part of the liturgy—is a Christianised form of the old Synagogue service may be taken as certain."

[7] Warren, pp. 195—199, 204.

But the Jewish observance of the hours of prayer was largely personal, private and spontaneous. We see this in the case of Daniel,[8] in the case of the apostle going up to the temple or to the housetop to pray.[9] Now it is a natural instinct of man to pray morning and evening, and when numbers of men have this habit, it is no less a natural instinct that leads them to join together to do so. So a fourth theory is that the daily services arose out of private prayer and the sense of Christian brotherhood. This is the theory of Mgr. Duchesne in his *Origins of Christian Worship*,[10] and, on the whole, of the great eighteenth century historian Bingham.[11] First, Morning and Evening Prayer became public, while prayer at the third, sixth and ninth hours long remained private. On the top of these regular daily customs that of keeping vigils on special solemn occasions was imposed, but in both cases the services were the outcome of spontaneous growth.[12]

II.

The evidence for these theories is drawn from three sources. It comes from the tradition of events that actually took place. It can be gathered from passages in the written works of authors that have been preserved. It is found formulated in Church Orders or definite rules drawn up for the ordering of services and other church customs. This is the natural order, for tradition goes back further than the records which write it down, while it takes time for customs to grow up and still more for them to be reduced to rules. Let us take a few

[8] Daniel vi. 10.
[9] Acts x. 9.
[10] Eng. tr. S.P.C.K., Ch. XVI.
[11] *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, Bk. XIII., Ch. 9.
[12] For the whole subject consult Dom Guitbert Bäumer's *Geschichte des Breviers* (Herder, 1895). French tr. by Dom Reginald Biron (Letouzey et Ané, 1905). A summary for the Ante-Nicene period, Vol. I., p. 185.

of the chief of these; others can be collected by the student for himself.

The often quoted passage in Pliny's letters, the earliest description of Christian worship outside the Bible, does not help us much.[13] It is too vague. It is sometimes quoted as supporting the vigil theory, but it suits the others equally well. The meeting referred to "before dawn on a stated day" may have been a sort of ante-communion preparation, a quasi-synagogue service, or the Eucharist followed by a Love Feast in the evening.

Other supposed references to vigils are sometimes given. Thus, in the account of the martyrdom of Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna (c. 156) the greater part of which was incorporated into his history by Eusebius, and is found in five later MSS., we read how, after the saint's body had been burned, the Christians of Smyrna "took up his bones, more valuable than precious stones, and more tried than gold, and deposited them where it was proper they should be," and went on to declare their intention "to collect there and celebrate the birthday of his martyrdom in joy and gladness."[14] Similarly, a hundred years later, Cyprian in Africa, and Gregory the Wonder Worker in Pontus (A.D. 258), refer to annual commemoration of the death days of martyrs.[15] But except for the mention of "offering of sacrifices," that is of Eucharists, there is no allusion to any special form of service or any proof as to where they took place.

In the account of the death of Cyprian himself, however, we get something more definite. We have both the contemporary quasi-official account of his trial, and also the story of his life by the deacon Pontius, who describes how, before the saint's martyrdom, the people "kept vigil" in the street

[13] Ep. Bk. X. No. 97. Warren, p. 44 (c. A.D. 112).
[14] Hist. Eccles., Bk. IV., Ch. 15. Warren, p. 142.
[15] Warren, p. 143.

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all night.[16] Some have seen here a reference to the Easter Vigil; others to all night watches at the tombs of the saints. In any case we know that such were observed in France, for in the authentic Acts written down only three years after the martyrdom of Saturninus of Toulouse who suffered in the Decian persecution of 250, we read how the good people of the city celebrated the day when he "earned his jewelled crown, with vigils, hymns and sacraments."[17]

Later references to vigils are frequent and undisputed, but fourth century evidence is no guide for the origin of church customs. After the peace of the Church there were no doubt all-night services on special occasions and regular evening and morning services called vigils.[18] Jerome had his theories too of their origin from the Easter watch.[19] But the stories that tell of these earlier days naturally have only survived when they tell of exceptional circumstances and do not really throw much light on general customs, while even such as we have witness equally for the theory of the origin of the Divine Office from the Eucharist as for this doubtful "vigil" theory.

We are not in much better case when we turn to the works of Christian authors. So little has come down to us from the first three centuries. References are slight and scattered; little more than incidental mention of anything like the Divine Office can be found. Thus, for instance, there is no mention of such a service in Justin's Apology, (c. A.D. 148), though he describes the Eucharist in some detail. The other apologists of the second century tell us nothing. But with the appearance of a more

[16] Vita Cypriani 15, Migne, P.L. III. 1495. *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, Cyprian, one volume ed. (Murray, 1911), p. 232.
[17] Bäumer, Vol. I., p. 78.
[18] Batiffol, p. 58, 59.
[19] Comm. in Matt. iv. 25, quoted Batiffol p. 2.

considerable literature we get more light thrown on the life of the Christian people, and such a literature arose out of the systematic teaching that was organised at Alexandria in the second half of the second century. Clement the second head of the Catechetical School in that city, (A.D. 150—212), in his rather miscellaneous compositions—he himself called one of his works *Stromateis* or *The Patch-work*—speaks of morning and evening prayer as a regular institution, and mentions besides that some also observe the third, the sixth, and the ninth hour, as well. There are several such references in his works,[20] but here again it is not quite clear whether the prayer he speaks of is private prayer, whether it is a preparation for the Eucharist, and, though he refers to psalms and hymns, we cannot tell whether they were sung by Christians in common, or by individuals alone, in the family or at public worship. Even in the writings of his more learned and more prolific successor, Origen, we find little more. He speaks of prescribed prayers night and morning, and advises men to pray three times a day (that is at mid-day as well), but in all he says there is no clear evidence of liturgical Common Prayer.[21]

From Africa we get more to go upon. Tertullian (A.D. 160—220), the converted lawyer and chief of the second century defenders of Christianity, the pioneer of Latin theology, refers in his Apology to the well-known letter of Pliny, but adds no comments that tell of the practice of his own times. In his treatise on Prayer,[22] however, he speaks of morning and evening prayer, as well as of the observance of the three day hours, but even this, though regarded as obligatory, is not clearly more than a private devotion. He gives various rules

[20] Collected in Bäumer, Vol. I., p. 62.
[21] Contr. Cels. IV. 41. De Orat XII. in Bäumer, Vol. I., p. 67—69.
[22] De Orat. XXIII.—XXVII.

about washing the hands, of standing and kneeling, (only the heathen, he tells us, sit), of the kiss of peace, of lifting up of hands, of dismissing guests with prayer, all of which may refer merely to private practice, but when he speaks of those present joining in the alleluia at the end and gives to this kind of worship a special name, "*oratio saturata*," we see he is speaking of an established custom. Similarly the singing of psalms and hymns by two people alternately (inter duos) who try each to see which can sing best, certainly suggests some kind of public worship, while the difficulty of the Christian wife whose pagan husband objects to her going out to evening services, and especially to the all-night vigil of Easter,[23] coupled with the description of the service after the evening meal, show that such meetings were a regular and recognised thing.

But it would be too much to say they prove the existence of any thing like a regular choir office. Even the evidence of Cyprian (A.D. 200—258) fifty years later, who in his treatise on the Lord's Prayer makes still clearer allusion to prayer morning and evening and at the three hours, does not warrant us in saying more than that they were probably said in common.[24] We get no clear proof till we turn to the evidence of the Church Orders.

Manuals of instruction were not, of course, wanting from the first. The *Didaché* or *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, is generally considered to be our earliest Christian writing outside the Bible, if indeed it is not a Jewish handbook altered and adapted for Christians. In it Christians are told to say the Lord's Prayer three times a day.[25] though its command "ye shall be frequently gathered together seeking the things that belong to your souls "[26] may refer to the Eucharist which it describes elsewhere.

[23] Ad uxor. II. 4.
[24] De Orat. XXXIV.
[25] Ch. VIII.
[26] Ch. XVI.

But it is naturally not till later that customs and rules were written down, and still later that they were collected and codified. Even in such collections as have been preserved the growth of the customs can be traced by the alterations and additions made. Thus the early third century collection known as the Egyptian Church Order, probably the work of the Greek speaking Roman bishop, Hippolytus, recommends the observance, in private, of three times of prayer in addition to the third, sixth and ninth hour, namely, bed-time, midnight, when all the world, the stars, the trees and the waves stand still to worship, and cockcrow. Prayer "at the bringing in of the lamps at the supper of the congregation" is described and Christians are ordered to go to "church and the place where there is instruction every morning" and, when there is no instruction, everyone is to read the scripture at home as well as he can. Whether these services were modelled on the private devotions of the people or on the *missa catechumenorum* or first part of the Eucharist, we cannot say.[27].

One other source of information remains. The singing of hymns was evidently popular, and many, both Christian and heretical, were composed in the first three centuries. We even find what are probably quotations from such lyrics in the New Testament.[28]. The majority of these were suppressed later as not being by David, and unauthorised,[29] but two stood their ground—the morning hymn "Glory be to God on high" our "*Gloria in excelsis*" and

[27] *The So-called Egyptian Church Order and derived documents.* Dom R. H. Conolly, Cambridge. *Texts and Studies*, 1916, p. 147. See also C. H. Turner, *The Church Order of St. Hippolytus. Church Quarterly Review*, Oct., 1917 and Oct., 1918. A translation will be found in an Appendix to the last edition of Duchesne's *Christian Worship*.

[28] Rom. xiii. 11, 12. Eph. v. 14. 1 Tim. iii. 16. 2 Tim. ii. 11—13.

[29] Batiffol, pp. 6—8.

the evening hymn, "Hail gladdening Light," incorporated by Bp. Andrewes in his "*Devotions*" and translated by Keble in the Lyra Apostolica[30] whence it has found its way into our hymn books and, in another form, into Sullivan's popular setting of Longfellow's *Golden Legend*. These were almost certainly sung in common, and held their place when regular daily services were established.

III.

Thus the early history of the Church shows certain elementary principles working—the close connexion of the Divine Office with the Eucharist, the prominence of the conception of worship, and, especially, the important part played by private devotion.

The consequences of the first two developed later but the principles are here, from the beginning. The daily services grew up round the Eucharist. It is impossible to appreciate them apart from the Eucharist. Since the Eucharist is the people's service, the choir office must be a popular service too. Again, Matins and Evensong are essentially acts of worship. We do not attend them primarily to get good. Just as in the Vigils the first thing was to watch before God and to make this possible the time was filled with singing and reading, so in our morning and evening service we put ourselves in the presence of God for a definite time and occupy ourselves with meditation on psalms and lessons, with singing canticles and with prayer.

To these two principles we shall return later, but the main lesson to be learned from the Early Church is to be drawn from the fact that the services grew up chiefly out of the spontaneous prayers of the people. We need to go back to the beginning again. Our present customs of daily prayer

[30] No. LXIII. *Hymns A. & M.* No. 18. Another rendering in the *English Hymnal*, No. 269. See below, p. 79.

are criticised and not altogether without justification. People say "Is it worth while to read the service to a congregation of two or three, or perhaps not even that?" Novelists do not fail to poke fun at the Parson going to church with his small devout following of ladies, and the conventional answer about the labouring man hearing the bell does not really meet the case.

Attendance at daily services does not increase. The mass of men are no more likely to join in them to-day than they were fifty years ago.

We have been in too great a hurry. It took the Church some three hundred years to evolve her daily services and we cannot expect to revive them in as many days. We must begin again at the beginning. We must set ourselves to work for the private use of the Prayer Book. We must try to get churchmen to read the psalms for the day, or one or more of the lessons of the calendar. We must teach our children to say the fixed part of the service from the Creed to the third collect for themselves. Then, when we have a number of men doing this with a sense of common action, we must try to get them to say them in church. We must have open churches with kneeling benches that invite to prayer. They must be open when people want them, not when we fancy they ought to; at early morning and late evening, before work and after it is done.

Then, as soon as there are enough visiting the church for their prayers, we may try to get them to unite in saying them together as in Roman Catholic countries they join in saying the Rosary. Then we may concentrate our forces round our Eucharists, and on special occasions, as did the early church, and as City men throng St. Paul's Cathedral on Saturday afternoon. We can get our sung or our said Evensong on Fridays or Saturdays as a preparation for the Sunday Communion. Guilds and Societies can join in saying Evensong on the nights they meet. A week-

day celebration on Thursday will lead to an Evensong on Wednesday.

Then we can work on to the daily recitation of the Office, as in places we have worked on to a daily celebration. We can arrange a rota of those who will undertake to come; as we arrange rota of servers, we can build up rotas of readers, of responders, of singers, remembering always that the service is a corporate act.

The parson is responsible for the superintendence of all this and is bound by the rubric to keep up the continuous chain of worship, but the spontaneous growth of common prayer must be a movement of the people independent of him. If only this were realised, the mission work of the church would go ahead. It is not necessary, say in Canada, to wait for a parson except for the sacraments. People can begin saying their offices for themselves. Men can gather together on Sunday to say Choir Offices in common. They can build churches and organise a body to render them with dignity. as the population grows. This was the way public worship grew in early times, and this is the way it must grow again.

CHAPTER II.

DAILY SERVICES IN THE FOURTH CENTURY.

"As you know well, we do more by common and responsive prayers than by single or private."
—INNOCENT I. Ad Aurel. et Aug. Ep. 16.

PUBLIC worship, other than that of the Eucharist, grew up mainly, as we saw, from the custom of private prayer, but two other elements helped its birth. It was closely connected with the Eucharist, the people's service, while the inheritance of the psalter from the Jews made certain the idea of liturgical worship. But if the individual element was the first to grow strong, that of popular church-going made itself felt in the fourth century, while later the idea of dignity of ritual was the chief mark of the service in the Middle Ages. This elaborateness developed in a non-popular, or aristocratic, direction after the decay of Latin as a spoken language, but the beginnings of the struggle between choir and people can be found in the period we have come to. To understand how all this came about we must look at some of the effects of the conversion of Constantine to Christianity in the year 313 A.D.

I.

Christianity became the religion of the State. Except for a brief period under Julian, there was no more danger of persecution, and there was a great influx of the rich into the fold.

One immediate consequence of this change was seen in the building of big churches, called basilicas from their royal size. There were not, of course, as is sometimes stated, law courts taken over for ecclesiastical use, because such buildings were naturally still wanted for the administration of justice, but they

were built on the same familiar plan, and were very different from the type of earlier church, a few examples of which still survive in the East.[1] Constantine and his mother, the Empress Helena, were specially interested in church architecture, and built basilicas at Rome, Constantinople, and Jerusalem. Placed at centres of government and of pilgrimage, they served as examples to other cities. These fine churches, it was felt, were not merely for use on Sundays. They stood open, among an out-of-door people accustomed to go in and out of the law-court basilicas, and it was natural that services should become frequent. With large numbers to draw upon, with staffs of clergy and officials to look after the buildings, regular daily worship could be maintained, and the now ever-growing Christian population of the towns made congregations certain.

But in large congregations at popular services there are differences of individuals. Many of the "Christians" were only catechumens, not of the "faithful" or baptised, just as we have in our own parishes communicants and mere church-goers. Just as to-day we find our Sunday congregations and our week-day, so a specially devout class soon differentiated itself. The type represented by Simeon and Anna at Jerusalem reappeared as ascetics—the *monazontes* and *parthenae,* that the lady pilgrim known as Sylvia, or Etheria, found at Jerusalem—and these formed an aristocracy of devotion. Though still lay men and women, they attended the daily offices, which the general public joined in on Sundays and festivals, or whenever it felt so disposed.

In time this contrast hardened. The devout people became regular monks and nuns. They multiplied and elaborated their services. They worked them up into seven separate offices and fixed their form, apportioning to each its special psalms. It was not without some struggle with the lay folk that they

[1] W. Lowrie, *Christian Art and Archæology* (Macmillan: 1901) p. 89 ff.

succeeded. In Spain we find the people, through their bishops in council, insisting on the morning and evening prayer that they could take part in, but the Religious naturally saw things from their own point of view, as do those who sit in our Choirs to-day. They were responsible for carrying on the services and, not unnaturally, did it their own way.

The monks gained increased respect and power with the reforms of St. Benedict. His men lived in common; the daily corporate rendering of the office was obligatory, but practical work was also part of their duty. They were often charged with the care of parish churches, and the parish clergy were ordered to conform their lives to the monastic standard, and, in particular, to be regular and diligent in saying their offices as an obligation every day.

But the change at the peace of the church was not a mere development; it represented a new attitude towards the world. The old antagonism to the State had its advantages. It made Christians sincere if they were liable to persecution for their faith. They influenced the world by the contrast of their lives. As they were few in number, discipline was easy to maintain. There was little dead wood in the Church. But it had also its disadvantages. Christians lived apart in an enforced Puritanism, and suffered in their religion from the narrowness it entailed. It is true, as Socrates had said long before, that it is better to be wronged than to wrong,[2] but persecution, while it tests men, is apt to cause in those who suffer a special bitterness which is not the spirit of Christ. The disadvantages of alliance with the State are generally recognised—the danger of secularisation, of insincere conversion, of appointment to office for political purposes, the difficulty of dealing with masses —but the advantages are often overlooked. It opened up in the fourth century an enormous field for the victory of the cross. The Church frankly accepted

[2] Plato Gorgeas, 469.

the task of christianising the civilisation of the time, its art, its music, its education, its rhetoric and literature. It was a bad period of art, but there at once appeared monuments of Christian architecture, fine churches with their painted walls and mosaic-lined domes, with the ornaments of their altars, and ceremonial of their ministers. The chant of the Church was elaborated with its double choirs, answering one another like the chorus of Attic drama. The works of the Christian Fathers, if inferior to the writings of the classic age, form the best literature of the time. Oratory found its continued life and new scope for its exercise in the pulpit, and there was a rich aftermath of literature in the wonderful language of the collects with their deep pathos, and pleading beauty.

The fourth century was a great age in the history of the Church, unparalleled till modern times. Before it, the Church was small in the world; after it, the people of the West sank into savage barbarism. She could ally herself with a rich and cultured civilisation and so reveal Christianity more as it really is, as universal, as Catholic. Her Worship was popular and alive. This strikes us as we read stories of resistance to tyranny, accounts of intelligent and inquiring pilgrims, letters of practical advice, exhortations of preachers, discussions about music, or, most of all, the actual words of prayers that throb with deeply-felt emotion. There was a hidden danger of worship becoming the possession of an aristocracy of piety and of the intellect, and of the people so being ousted from their rights, but at present the danger was far off. The Divine Office was pre-eminently a people's service.

II.

Let us now look at some of the evidence on which the above statements are based.

Feeling ran high at Antioch in the fourth century, and Bishop Leontius (A.D. 348—357) had trouble with

his flock. He seems to have been a tactful man and to have managed difficult situations with considerable success. It is said that he "foresaw that on his death the conduct of affairs would fall into less cautious hands, and touching his white hairs predicted that 'when this snow melts there will be much mud.'"[3]

But his tact gained him no credit with the historian Theodoret who "gives a summary of his evil conduct."[4] He was suspected of leanings to Arianism, so he could do nothing right. His conciliatory attitude was a mask; he was of so artful a disposition that he might be said to resemble sunken rocks in the sea. When the congregation was divided and some sang in the Gloria Patri "and *to* the Son and *to* the Holy Ghost," while others said "through" and "in," he temporised and offered the doxology in silence and all that those standing near him could hear was "for ever and ever." Theodoret will not have it that he adopted this contrivance from a wish to promote concord among the people, "for the wickedness of his soul was betrayed by other means"; he promoted a certain Aetius to be a deacon. This was too much for Flavianus and Diodorus, two lay men "who had embraced an ascetic career," so they threatened to withdraw from his communion, and denounce him in the Western Empire and so to publish his plots throughout the world.

This worthy couple (the words are those of Theodoret) found, however, a better way of gaining their orthodox end. They organised their fellow laity into double choirs and taught them to sing the psalms of David antiphonally. They then arranged unofficial services in the churches at the tombs of the martyrs outside the city, and these took the form of all night

[3] *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, Art. *Leontius*. One volume edition, p. 658.

[4] *Hist. Eccles.* II. 19. (24) Migne P.G. LXXXII. 1060. Eng. tr. in the *Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (Parker: 1892). Vol. III., p. 84.

vigils. Leontius was in a difficulty. The movement was popular. He saw that the people were "exceedingly well disposed towards these excellent men," so he compromised. "Putting on a colour of courtesy in his speeches," he requested that they would perform the act of worship in the churches in the town. They had gained their point. Though "aware of his evil intent" they obeyed his request. The new style of singing was recognised in the official churches and proved a great success. "The practice spread in all directions and penetrated to the end of the earth." The two ascetics, who were afterwards ordained and became bishops, made the public services orthodox and popular, while Leontius by his readiness to meet them stopped what might have proved very undesirable proceedings. Antioch was henceforward considered the home of this style of antiphonal singing, which seems to have been the native Syrian method, and tradition soon connected it with the famous second century Antiochene martyr Ignatius, who was said to have learned it from seeing a vision of angels worshipping the Holy Trinity in antiphonal hymns.[5]

The movement was clearly a popular one. From Antioch it spread to Cappadocia, Cæsarea, Jerusalem, Constantinople, and the West. Milan was, for a period in the fourth century, the centre of Italian life, both civil and religious. The Court favoured Arianism. At the instigation of his mother, Justina, Valentinian tried to seize the churches. Ambrose tells us in two of his letters how he refused to give up the new large basilica.[6] The bishop, he declared, had no power to give up what belonged to God, and the people applauded his refusal. The Prefect asked for at least the Portian basilica; "the people clamoured against it." The next day, during service time, the Emperor sent some soldiers (decanos) to hang up

[5] Socrates, *Hist. Eccles.*, VI. 8. Migne P.G. LXVII., 688. See also Hooker, *Eccles. Polity*, Bk. V., Ch. 39, §2.
[6] Epist. 20 and 22.

curtains in preparation for Arian worship, and Ambrose had to send priests and deacons to rescue them from the violence of the congregation. Many were sentenced and the prisons were full of tradespeople. Heavy penalties were threatened if the church was not given up, since, declared the Emperor, "everything was under his power." Ambrose would have obeyed if he had been asked for that which was his, his land, his money—though all he had belonged to the poor—"but the things that are God's are not subject to the imperial power."

The next morning the basilica was surrounded by soldiers, but they, in fear of the people, sided with Ambrose, saying they had come for prayer and not for fighting. Ambrose preached and introduced references to Jezebel and Herodias, but for all that he was anxious. They sang the refrain "O God the heathen are come into thine inheritance," and passed the whole day in church, since the soldiers would not let them go home. The boys cut the imperial hangings in derision, and the people were only kept from utter weariness through their long vigil that day and the next, as Augustine tells us, by "singing hymns and psalms after the use of the Eastern provinces,"[7] till finally, to the joy of all, including the soldiers, Valentinian and Justina gave in. The discovery a few days after of the bodies of two saints, Gervasius and Protasius, finally settled the matter. The popular party had won, and that by dint of possessing and holding the buildings with popular services and singing.

This was, of course, an exceptional occasion, but services cannot be improvised entirely without precedent, and ordinarily, we find, there were two services daily to which people came. Monica, the mother of Augustine, when at Rome, "twice in the day, at

[7] *Confessions*, Bk. IX., Ch. 7. See also Paulinus, *Vita Ambrosii*, Chs. 8, 14 and 15. Migne P.L. XIV., 27—46, and a vivid but hostile account in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, Ch. XXVII.

morning and at evening, went without fail" to church.[7] At Milan she used to go to the memorials of the saints bringing her basket of food and wine, as she always used to at her home in Africa, till forbidden by the good bishop Ambrose, who "loved her for her godly conversation which led her so constantly to church." Whenever he met the brilliant young professor, he made conversation, as bishops should, and congratulated him on having such an excellent mother.[8]

Another feature of popular church life was that of pilgrimage. Jerusalem, where the Empress Helena believed she had discovered the true cross, where she and her son Constantine had built basilicas at the Holy Places, was naturally the chief centre to which people came. Among these, towards the end of the fourth century, was a Spanish lady whose name was probably Etheria, though she is generally known as Sylvia. This was the name given to her by the discoverer of her journal, who identified her with the sister of the Consul Rufinus.[9] She was a diligent and interested sight-seer, and wrote down her impressions of the people and the services for the benefit of her fellow religious in Spain. She stayed some time in the Holy Land, and was present, probably in the year 385, at all the ceremonies of Holy Week at the Holy Sepulchre, the sanctuary of the Cross, and the big Martyrium on the supposed site of the Crucifixion. We gather from her description[10] that there were five services (other than the Eucharist), spread over day and night, vigils, lauds, sext, none, and vespers, to which in Lent terce was added. These offices consisted of psalms and antiphons, with prayers and responds and lessons from the Old and New

[7] *Confessions*, Bk. V., Ch. 9, 17.
[8] Bk. VI., Ch. 2.
[9] *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, Art. *Sylvia*, p. 917.
[10] An English translation of a large part of the diary will be found at the end of Duchesne's *Christian Worship*. The whole has been published by the S.P.C.K.

Testament, after which the bishop came in and dismissed the congregation with his blessing. The form of the service was fixed in outline, and a lectionary was being evolved, for she is much struck with the appropriateness of the lessons.[11] She could evidently hear and follow all, and records the effect of the boys' voices and the stir that accompanied the reading of the Gospel.[12] The details of the service varied from what she had been accustomed to, and there was evidently great flexibility in the choice of words and much scope for enrichment. The services were attended by two classes of people, some, such as the vigils, by the "*monazontes* and *parthenae*," or monks and nuns as they came to be later, with such of the pilgrims as were more indefatigable, while vespers with its illumination, lauds and the Sunday night vigil, and the Holy Week services, were joined in by crowds of pilgrims. The service, that is, was primarily popular, but the burden of regular daily maintenance fell chiefly on the clergy and the religious.

That is to say, organisation was necessary, and there can be traced two elements of organisation, clerical and monastic. The problem of clerical organisation naturally arose in great cities. From the sermons of Chrysostom at Antioch and at Constantinople we can gather how the people came, or did not come, to the Divine Office. It is not enough, he says, to pray at home and only to come to church for sermons.[13] People can easily come if they choose; the excuse that they are pinned down in the law courts is only an excuse, though, of course, people who are really prevented from coming can pray in private.[14] He refers to Psalm 140 (141, 2: Let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice), and to Ps. 62 (63: O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee), as well known from having been sung for years,

[11] Duchesne, p. 551, 553, 558, 559, 560, etc.
[12] P. 561.
[13] Hom. III. Contr. Anom. Migne P.G. XLVIII., 725.
[14] Hom. IV. de Anna. Migne P.G. LIV., 667.

morning and evening in church, though his hearers do not, he knows, pay much attention to them.[15] Good churchmen (μύσται) he says, know how every morning and evening there are intercessions.[16] Building churches is more important than building baths and markets; there ought to be a church in every village. What a thing it is to be able to go in and out knowing that it is God's house.[18]. At Constantinople he found the daily services were neglected and urged the women to come by day and the men who were busy all day to come in the evening, much to the annoyance of the more slack among the clergy who liked to have their sleep out at night.[19]

Such clerical advice and organisation became codified in rules which are known as Church Orders. A fourth century collection which was referred to by a writer who posed as Ignatius, was, therefore, believed to be of apostolic origin and came to be called the Apostolic Constitutions. In reality, the first six books of the work were enlarged from earlier Syriac collections similar to the Egyptian Church Order[20] of Hippolytus, the seventh from the Didaché, while the eighth is a liturgy based, probably, on current practice though not actually ever used. We can thus by comparison of one part with another trace the development of the services.

In the seventh book, as in the Didaché, we find mention of Sunday services, and of Wednesday and Friday fasts, with a recommendation to say the Lord's Prayer three times a day. In the second and fifth we find allusion to the singing of lauds and vespers daily, a custom now apparently firmly established, and to the Easter vigil. In the sixth, vigils on the

[15] Expos. in Ps. CXL. Migne P.G. LV., 426.
[16] Expos. in Ep. i. ad Tim. ii. 1. Migne P.G. XLI., 530.
[18] Hom. XVIII. in Act. Apost. v. Migne P.G. LX., 147.
[19] Palladius, *Dialog. de Vita S. Johanni's Chrysostomi*, V. Migne P.G. XLVII., 20. Most of the above will be found in Bäumer, Vol. I., p. 131, and in *Bingham's Antiquities*, Bk. XIII., Ch. IX., §8.
[20] See above, p. 11.

anniversaries of the deaths of martyrs are mentioned, while in the eighth, the form of a service similar to that witnessed by Sylvia, is described in detail with its psalms and formal dismissals of the different classes of worshippers one by one.[21]

In the two following centuries enactments were repeatedly made that the clergy were publicly to say nocturns, lauds and vespers in their churches. A canon attributed to the fourth council of Carthage (A.D. 398), but apparently of the fifth century and from Gaul, orders that if a cleric is absent from the night office without the excuse of sickness *(absque corpusculi sua inaequalitate)* he is to be fined *(stipendiis privetur)*. At Vannes (A.D. 465) it was ordered that if he were absent from lauds he was to be excommunicated for seven days. At Agde (A.D. 506) lauds and vespers were ordered to be sung with antiphons, hymns, and collects. At Tarragona (A.D. 516) an arrangement was to be made by which all the clergy were to be present on Sunday and to take the services turn and turn about on week-days; but the fact that these continuous orders had to be given shows that even the accompanying threats did not make them very effective. Finally, in the year A.D. 530 Justinian issued a decree that both in East and West the parish clergy were to say nocturns, matins and vespers, asking if it was not a disgrace *(quomodo non fuerit indecens)* seeing that the laity showed themselves keen on church-going and psalm singing *(ad sanctissimas ecclesias confluentes studiosos circa psalmodiam se ostendunt)* if the clergy, who were ordained for that very purpose *(ad id ordinatos)*, did not do their duty.[22]

[21] For the Greek text see Fr. X. Funk, *Die Apostolische Constitutionen*. Rottenburg: 1891. There seems to be no English translation. A good many selections will be found at the end of Warren's *Liturgy of the Ante-Nicene Church*, pp. 235—293. See also A. J. Maclean, *The Ancient Church Orders*. Cambridge: 1910. p. 59.

[22] For the above see Bäumer, Vol. I., p. 219—226. Batiffol, p. 24.

Meanwhile, the influence of monasticism was telling in another direction and represented a rather different ideal. John Cassian, who has been called the founder of Western Monasticism, was brought up in a monastery at Bethlehem and travelled with his friend Germanus in Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia and Egypt. In the year A.D. 402 he was ordained by Chrysostom at Constantinople, and in A.D. 415 he settled in Southern Gaul, where two years later he wrote his book on monasticism, the *De Coenobiorum Institutis*.[23]

He specially admired the customs that he found in Egypt where he stayed for seven years. He believed that the earlier traditions of the founder of Eastern desert life, St. Anthony, and of Pachomius who first (A.D. 348) drew up a rule for hermits, still survived there. He describes how the monks met only twice a day for vespers and vigils, saying their prayers at the third, sixth, and ninth hours privately, for the custom of saying them in common which he knew at Bethlehem, was a recent one. The service consisted of twelve psalms, usually with two lessons, one from the Old and one from the New Testament, a form which, it was believed, had been settled once and for all when certain enthusiastic and quarrelsome monks proposed to sing fifty or even sixty and went on disputing till the time of service, when an angel came and chanted twelve, adding a prayer to each, and, after telling the monks to respond with an alleluia to the last one, disappeared.[24]

Each psalm was sung by one of the brothers while the rest sat and listened. When it was finished, all

[23] *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, Art. *Cassian*. F. Cabrol, *Dictionaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne*, Art. *Cassian*. A good summary of the history of monasticism will be found at the beginning of F. A. Gasquet's *English Monastic Life*. The Antiquary's Books (Methuen: 4th Ed. 1910). It is largely based on that in Butler's *Lausiac History of Palladius*. Cambridge. See also the article *Monasticism* in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

[24] De Inst. Coenob II. v. Bäumer Vol. I., p. 138—150. Batiffol p. 26.

stood for a time in silent prayer, after which they prostrated themselves—though not for too long, lest they should go to sleep—and then they stood again with raised arms while the priest recited a collect, during which, it is specially mentioned, they were not to spit, or cough, or yawn, or groan, or sigh, or say anything to interrupt.[25] This order Cassian believed to be the older and better form of service and he disapproved of what he considered to be an innovation in Palestine when prime had to be introduced between matins and the liturgy to prevent the monks going to sleep again between the two services.

Basil was also an admirer of Eastern Monasticism, though not, perhaps, so wholehearted in his admiration as was Cassian. After his conversion in the year 356 A.D., when, like Augustine, he gave up his post as a teacher of rhetoric with the brilliant career that it promised, he left Cæsarea and travelled in Egypt, Palestine, Cœle-Syria, and Mesopotamia. What he saw there determined him to retire from the world, and he called on his friend Gregory to join him in carrying out the plan they had often talked of in their old student days at Athens. At first there were little difficulties over tne choice of a site for their settlement, but these were soon got over, and the two friends organised their lives and the lives of those who joined them and established what is commonly called the Basilian rule of Eastern Monasticism.

But separation from the world was no new thing, and Eustathius of Sebaste had already done much to encourage it. Basil's work was rather that of organising and moderating the existing forms of asceticism with their competitions in austerities between individuals and their dangers of relapse. He brought into the service of the Church a movement that hitherto, in Egypt and Syria, had been singularly outside her regular life, and was, therefore, all the more dangerous when it suddenly entered into it. He

[25] De Inst. Coenob III. Migne P.L. XLIX. 98.

combined the conceptions of active work in study, in education of orphans, and in ministration to the sick, with that of retirement, by giving strong preference to the common life over the ideal of Egypt which placed the solitary life in the forefront. He drew up no actual rule and it is a mistake to talk of the Eastern Monasticism "following the rule of Basil," but he left behind him various exhortations, suggestions and pieces of advice, which were called for as the problems of common life demanded his counsel. These survive in various forms, the two most important being known as his longer and his shorter rule.[26]

From these we learn something about the common worship of the communities. We find that the hours of prayer were elaborated into eight. The monks were to pray in the morning to consecrate the coming day; at the third hour in recollection of the descent of the Holy Spirit; at the sixth after the example of the saints who pray at noon-day and that instantly, and to protect themselves from the sickness that destroyeth in the noon-day; at the ninth as did the Apostles; at the end of the day "communing in their chambers"; at the beginning of the night, saying again the 90th Psalm; at midnight "rising to give thanks" like SS. Paul and Silas; and again at day-break "preventing the night watches."[27]

Elsewhere we read of the antiphonal method of singing, which later he seems to have introduced into parish churches, though not without opposition.[28] He appears not only to have elaborated the hours of prayer but also the structure of the service. Though certain psalms are generally to be sung at certain hours the choice does not seem to be absolutely fixed nor is the whole psalter, it would seem, regularly gone

[26] See W. K. Lowther Clarke, *Basil the Great*. Cambridge: 1913. p. 114ff.

[27] Bäumer, Vol. I., pp. 115—117.

[28] Epist. 207. Migne P.G. XXXII. 760. Tr. Blomfield Jackson, *Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. (Parker: 1895.) p. 248.

through. Indeed, he declares that "it is better to have change and variety in the prayers and psalmody at the fixed hours, and for this reason, that with uniformity the soul is somehow depressed and wearied, while with change and variety of psalmody and words at each hour the desire to praise is revived and attention is re-established.[29]

Cassian had seen the essential difference between the East and the West both in climate and in habits of the peoples, and was ready where necessary to modify the Egyptian practice that he so much admired, but the current monasticism of his time still remained essentially Oriental and somewhat exotic. It was Benedict of Nursia who succeeded in adapting monasticism to Western conditions and needs, and he "owed more of the ground idea of his rule to St. Basil than to any other monastic legislator."[30] His rule, drawn up about the year 530 A.D. was, in its obligations, at once stricter and more human. He insisted on common life while he discouraged individual austerities, on permanent vows and continued to stay at one monastery, thus providing for old age. His monks were properly clothed, but they were allowed no personal property; they were well cared for but owed obedience to the authorities. Manual or literary work was made part of their duty. Benedict was a legislator, where Basil was a preacher, and this appears in his regulations for common worship which occupy a far more prominent place in his rule than in Basil's monks.

In it, the form of service that lasted through the Middle Ages first clearly makes its appearance. The services are arranged for the eight hours as by Basil, or for seven if Matins and Lauds are counted as one. The number of psalms is reduced and the lessons are made shorter to leave time for work, but

[29] Reg. Fus. tract. Quæst. 37. Migne P.G. XXXI. 1015.

[30] Butler in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Art. *Basilian Monks*.

the service now definitely appears as with a balanced structure of psalms, hymns, lessons, canticles, and prayers. The readings are ordered on a cycle of lessons lasting over the year, while the Psalter is arranged to be said as a whole. Any monastery is free to alter the particular arrangement that he gives provided that the whole, "said by ancient fathers every day,"[31] is duly recited each week. The service is substantially that which has survived to this day in the Roman Breviary.

Benedict, of course, must have had precedents; he could not have insisted on such a form of service if it had been quite a new thing. Tradition has it that Damasus (A.D. 366—384) asked St. Jerome to re-translate the Psalter because he wished it to be used in a weekly rota, but this rests only on a sixth century document purporting to be a letter of his.[32] With more probability it is held that Pope Cœlestine (A.D. 422—432) was the first to order the use of the whole as distinct from that of special psalms,[33] but it is only with Benedict that we have clear detailed evidence of the use of the weekly rota.

III.

Let us try to picture this popular worship of the fourth century. First of all, the building. This is not difficult, as many of the original churches survive to this day. Some have been so altered that only a fourth century mosaic remains visible in the midst of late rococo alterations.[34] Others have been added to and embellished but still retain the main lines of the original.[35] Some have been re-built, but have preserved the old furniture and fittings.[36] Others have

[31] *Regula*, Ch. 18.
[32] Bäumer, Vol. I., p. 199.
[33] *Lib. Pont.*, Vol. I., p. 230.
[34] As, e.g., the Church of St. Pudenziana at Rome.
[35] As, e.g., the Lateran Basilica.
[36] As, e.g., San Clemente.

been accurately restored with exact antiquarian knowledge.[37] Of others, which have wholly disappeared, pictures have been preserved.[38]

We must imagine a long rectangular structure entered by a fine portico with perhaps a cloistered courtyard. Inside is a wide space between a double row of marble pillars taken it may be from some dismantled Pagan temple. Conspicuous at one end is the ciborium, or baldachino, over the altar, but curtains hanging from its pillars hide the Holy Table itself from view. Before it, steps lead down to the *confessio*, or crypt, where lies the body of a martyr. Behind is an apse with seats round its wall on which sit the clergy. The Bishop's throne is in the middle, looking down the church to the altar and people. Above in the mosaic of its semi-dome is seen a dim majestic figure of Christ in glory with Apostles or saints surrounding Him. In front of the altar is a raised platform, fenced off by a rail of white marble, with high marble pulpits or reading desks on each side.

In this chancel is a body of singers. The singing is perhaps nasal, slow, even drawled. At one time it is a single voice that is heard alternating with the united voices of the whole body; in some places two choirs will be answering one another, and the shrill voices of boys will answer the deep tones of men. Sometimes it is a mere recitative, more like that of a Welsh preacher "mewn hwyl" than formal music. If we are in Spain, or Palestine, after each psalm there is perhaps silence, broken presently by a prayer summing up the ideas in what has just been sung. The people are moving about. There are no seats. There is conversation. The congregation hums as the choir sings, or joins in a refrain given out at the beginning of each psalm. When a familiar psalm is begun it is taken up by the whole body of voices.

[37] As, e.g., Sta. Maria in Cosmedin.

[38] As, e.g., Old St. Peter's, or the nave of St. Paolo, Fuori le Mura.

Sometimes the crowding is unseemly; undesirable people may be there; on vigil nights young girls must keep close to their mothers.[39] Men come in when they like; they crowd up to the front when the reader ascends the pulpit; there is a general stir when the bishop comes in towards the end of the service to say the collects and give his blessing. A similar sight can be seen in almost any church in Italy to-day, but with the difference that of the fourth century service *every word can be understood*. It is in the vernacular. The reading is slow, clear, emphatic, intelligent.

IV.

What can we learn from the fourth century to-day? First, the value of big churches. It is surely a mistake to think that people, and especially men, prefer small mission halls or services in side chapels. See how they will go to St. Paul's Cathedral, or to the big Nonconformist missions when they will go nowhere else. We must build larger and finer churches if our services are to be services of the people.

Big churches mean much greater freedom for the congregation. The whole area need not be crowded up with pews. It is doubtful if there were any seats in the fourth century. We need more room, greater variety of kneeling benches and chairs, less formality in their arrangement, more open areas which will give the sense of space even in small buildings.[40]

The people went in and out as they liked. Men must feel free to come in late if they please. This is an invariable feature in all popular religious ser-

[39] Jerome Epist. CVII. Ad Lætam "ne transverso quidem ungue a matre discedat." Migne P.L. XXXII. 875.

[40] For a realisation of this in the Middle Ages, see Cf. Pecocke's *Repressor* (R.S.L. p. 553. Quoted in A. G. Little's *Studies in English Franciscan History*. (Manchester University Press: 1917) p. 132. "As for the justifying of the large and wide Churches which religious persons, especially the begging religious, make—so that there be not over-great curiosity, gayness, preciosity, or

vices, it can be seen in Roman Catholic Cathedrals abroad, in Jewish Synagogues, at Salvation Army gatherings, in our own Mothers' Meetings, at home. Only in our Church do we frown upon it. The consequence is that people think they must come sharp to time or not at all, with the consequence that it is generally not at all. Moreover, the reverse of the liberty to come late is liberty to come early, and we, by our primness, have almost killed the habit of coming for private prayer before the Office begins.

Again, in the fourth century, congregations were let alone. It is true that in one of the Church Orders there are directions for deacons to keep order,[41] but the command seems to show that people generally were allowed to go where they chose and do what they liked, even to applaud the sermon. It is not enough to provide space and abolish pew rents. We must give strict instructions to vergers and sidesmen not to fuss people about, never to stand at the door staring at them as they come in, nor to pounce on them the moment they enter, but, as does a tactful shop walker, to stand back, to give them time to look round, and go where they like, and then, if they ask for direction, to point to them where to go and to give them books if they need them.[42]

The service, though not yet stereotyped, was on lines generally fixed. A popular service, unless of the baldest description, must be liturgical; otherwise the people will never know what is coming next. They must be conducted by a clergy possessed of liturgical

costiousness—sufficeth and is enough this: that thereby the more multitude of persons may be received together for to hear therein preachings to be made on rainy days: and also that thereby in other whiles the greater multitude may be the more eased in their devotions making to God, whiles they stand or sit or kneel at a distance from each other, and not one such is nigh another's cheek."

[41] *Apostolical Constitutions*, Book II., Cn. 57, in Warren, *Liturgy of the Ante-Nicene Church*, p. 284.

[42] See my *Pastoral Theology and the Modern World* (Oxford: 1920), p. 161. "Letting people alone."

knowledge and the general outlines, and a sufficient element of the liturgy must be familiar to the people. There must be parts of the nature of refrains.

It is not necessary for the congregation to join in everything—indeed, continual singing is tiring—but if they are given no active share they become bored and undevout. It is said that the most popular concert is that in which everyone takes part. Folk songs that survive are generally those with refrains. The same instinct that created them needs to find hallowed expression in worship.

The pitch of our singing must not be too high, nor our music move over intervals too great for the people to sing with ease. Plainsong is the natural music of a body of men singing in unison. Music must not be run up to show off the voices of the boys in the choir. A singing congregation will find its own pitch. There were no organs in the fourth century churches to drown or strain men's voices.

The pace must be slow. Without drawling, as too often in the East, in Lutheran, or Scottish churches, the music must move with a steady, dignified swing. If a congregation is left to take its own time it will sing slowly. There is no merit in mere quickness. Jerkiness is not brightness. But the music sung must be strong, such as will stand slow singing; it must not be made up of paltry part-song tunes. Moreover, whether the service is sung or said, there must be no clipping of responses or gabbling by the priest. He must give the congregation time to finish their sentences before he begins the next, otherwise he will soon silence them.

There must be clear enunciation. All song must be based on speech. The meaning of the words matters more than the sound of the notes. Choirs must be trained to read the words first and then to sing them. Our singers in popular musical plays take care that they are heard, it is only the tiresome performer of the drawing room ballad, whose audience cannot go away, that thinks it necessary to sacrifice

sense to sound. When a psalm is chanted, or an antiphon sung, every word ought to be distinguished.

In the early church the congregation tended to a certain division. An aristocracy of devotion, an official class grew up. The same is happening to-day. An opposition of interests often rises between choir and congregation. The former want to quicken pace, to raise pitch, to elaborate harmony, to make the service "brighter," so that the fine effects of massive singing by the whole body are lost. Its members tend to think only of the music and can often be seen turning over their scores during the lessons. Men are admitted to membership because they have good voices without other qualifications. Even the best tend to become service-hardened. The remedy is for them and for the clergy to worship from time to time in the body of the church.

Similarly we find our "*monazontes* and *parthenæ*" to-day. There is a tendency for everything to be managed by a clique of servers or church-workers. Our Offices are adapted to their point of view in language, and in feeling. Our hymns, for instance, move in planes quite other than those of normal thought. The contrast of our conventionally rendered offices with the quite unliturgical arrangements we adopt for special men's services show how far are both from the ideal.

Finally, in the fourth century there was no difference in character between ecclesiastical and secular art except that that of the church was purer and better. For centuries after, the Church led the way in music, architecture and painting, because the people in the West had sunk into barbarism. Now secular life has caught up that of the Church. Church art is inferior, below the level of that of the nation. Our drawing-rooms are furnished and our churches are bare. No one would put flowers in lacquered brass vases on their dining tables, but they are considered suitable for the altar. Musicians who join in string quartets at home, and unmusical people who frequent restaurants where

an at least efficient band is engaged, have their devotions led by uneducated children whose faults of singing are drowned by a noisy organ. Men who read the well-written, if somewhat superficial, articles in the daily press for six days have to listen to the ill-composed and ill-delivered pulpit efforts of untrained priests. There must be a place in the church for the most elaborate and best music as well as for the highest pictorial and plastic art, or else we must confess that we are out of touch in our worship with the broad stream of modern popular life.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHOIR OFFICE IN THE DARK AND MIDDLE AGES.

There is a story of a monk who left the Beatific Vision that he might take his service in the choir.
—J. H. SHORTHOUSE, *John Inglesant*, Ch. XXXVI.

THE Fourth Century saw the beginnings of a cleavage in Christendom; an aristocracy of devotion and of intellect was growing up. This hardened into monasticism in the Dark Ages, when the monasteries became the chief centres both of religion and of civilisation. For good and evil, they remained such all through the Middle Ages as well, and this fact had certain marked effect on the development of the Divine Office.

I.

The monks lived together in close companionship, a condition of life which led to the elaboration of ritual and ceremonial in their daily offices. They were proud of their fine churches, and the various orders vied with one another in making them magnificent. Worship was offered up regularly by a large body of men in a setting of fine architecture on a broad stage of a well planned choir. Constant practice gave skill in liturgical art. Music was elaborated into song that was by no means always plain; the service was embroidered with antiphons and responds, and the unregulated popular methods of singing of earlier times were reduced by a fine sense of fitness to artistic proportions. The calendar for the year was enriched with Holy Days and commemorations in ordered ranks. There was no difficulty in procuring service books as the monastery was itself the book factory; and we find there was just the same tendency to accumulate

them and to multiply Saints Days that we find, in perhaps a lesser degree, among the singers and clergy who occupy our chancels to-day.

Side by side with this continual process of elaboration can be traced also a continual series of efforts to simplify the office. It began with St. Basil who regulated and shortened the devotions of the monks in the East, and it was continued by St. Benedict, who established a fixed method of singing the Psalter through once a week. Whole psalms sung as introits and graduals became reduced to single verses. Responsorial psalms were shortened till they took the common form which only requires one new verse for the response to reinterpret. The lessons were continually abbreviated. Saints days were multiplied because the Office for them was shorter than that for ordinary days. For Friars travelling, and for the Parish clergy who could not afford many books, the whole was condensed into one—the breviary. The process is still going on in the recent reforms of the Roman Office begun by Pius X.

The Office became purely a clerical or Choir Office, and this entailed two further consequences. Rome was the centre of Western civilisation except at certain periods, and even during these, other countries still believed she held her former place. The Church, continually more and more centralised at Rome, was closely associated with the old world. This made progress, especially among barbarous peoples, lie in conservatism. Rome remained as Virgil had seen her centuries before—inartistic, puritan, without eloquence, but with strong practical, unifying and disciplinary powers,[1] and as such she

[1] ~~Onora~~ VI., 847.

Excudent alii spirantia mollius aera
Credo equidem, vivos ducent de marmore voltus
Orabunt causas melius, coelique meatus
Describent radio, et surgentia sidera dicent.
Tu rege imperio populos, Romane, memento,
Hae tibi erunt artes; pacisque imponere morem,
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.

worked on the Northern peoples—individualistic, sentimental, emotional, vigorous, " dark and true and tender."[2] So the Divine Office became Western in its form, (and " Western " means largely "Roman" in character), where in the fourth century it was Catholic.

A further limitation was brought about by the change of language. Latin survived as the language of the educated, and maintained its place with all the prestige that is given by a great literature. The popular tongues were local and at best found expression in tales and ballads. In the East Greek remained, and still remains, the language both of Church and people, but in the West the masses were cut off from the Choir Offices. In this respect the Middle Ages were the least Catholic ages of the Church.

The result was seen in the great development of the Mass. It had always been the main people's service, and the difficulty of language was faced—the language of action was to a great extent substituted for the language of words. But this was impossible for the Divine Office. It was no one's fault; the loss though great, was inevitable. Popular devotions grew up to take its place, and to supplement the Mass. This was the time that saw the great development in the cultus of saints, when the

" Others belike with happier grace
From bronze and stone shall call the face,
Plead doubtful causes, map the skies,
Or tell when planets set or rise.
But Roman thou, do thou control
The nations far and wide;
Be this thy genius to impose
The rule of peace on vanquished foes,
And crush the sons of pride."

[2] Tennyson, *The Princess*.
" O tell her, swallow, thou that knowest each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,
And dark and true and tender is the North."
cf. Mrs. Browning's *The North and the South*.

use of the Rosary began,[3] when the Angelus bell was first rung,[4] when pilgrimages grew popular, and primers in the vernacular were composed.

II.

Tradition ascribes an active part in the development of the services of the Church to Gregory the Great. This was not confined to his rearrangement and alteration of the words of the Mass, though he is said to have made important changes there too, and one of the great Sacramentaries is called by his name. More important, or perhaps we should say better known, is the change he is said to have effected in the music of the Church in substituting the "gregorian" style of singing for the earlier "ambrosian" which has survived at Milan to this day without essential change. His work, which of course others had begun before, seems to have consisted in collecting, and perhaps writing down, the traditional melodies (though our earliest extant noted books only date from the eighth and ninth centuries), in insisting on the connexion of words and music, in restraining the singers, in simplifying when elaborate chanting tended to delay the progress of the service but giving full scope to the musician when it did not do so, for he was ready even to shorten a psalm rather than curtail a good melody for its antiphon. These were reforms all based on sound principles and showing him both as a practical man and as a lover of art.

[3] Popularised in the fifteenth century by the Dominicans. In the time of Dominic himself the Ave Maria in the present form was unknown. The festival of the Rosary was first made general in the Latin Church by Clement XI. (1700–1721), cf. V. Thalhofer, *Handbuch der Katholischen Liturgik*, B. I., p. 707.

[4] The earliest traces are found in the thirteenth century. By the fifteenth century the custom had become fairly general. Thalhofer, B. I., p. 309. The custom of saying the Lord's Prayer thrice a day at the lesser hours, is, on the other hand, primitive and catholic.

He was not content with making rules or even with collecting music; he is said to have founded schools of singing boys (*scholæ cantorum*) and to have given up two of his houses to lodge them in. Further it was told that he took an actual part in their training, and two hundred years later a couch was shown from which, it was said, he taught the boys to sing, a whip with which he punished or threatened to punish them, together with his book of antiphons.

It is true that the authority for these statements is late. John the deacon who is the first to mention them in detail wrote in the ninth century,[5] but there are others who corroborate his statements, such as Alcuin, (A.D. 735—815), Amalarius (A.D. 782—850), Walafrid Strabo (A.D. 807—849) and Bede (A.D. 670—735), representing a strong tradition.[6] Still it is possible to deny him any great share in building up the chant of the Church and this has been done by M. Batiffol, who holds that the great development of plainsong and ceremonial took place gradually from the fourth to the eighth centuries, that many persons played their part in it, and that the end of this period represents in this matter of liturgical music what in his earlier edition of his History he calls "the Golden Age" of the Breviary.[7] But in his later editions he seems to have suppressed the phrase and modified his view; for those centuries were periods of decadence and trouble from wars and invasion of barbarous tribes. They were times of unifying, codifying, and preserving rather than of initiative and development.[8]

The substantial trustworthiness of the tradition

[5] *Vita S. Gregorii*, II. 6. Migne P.L. LXXV. 90., quoted, Batiffol, p. 42.

[6] For these references see P. Wagner, *Introduction to the Gregorian Melodies*. Tr. A. Orme and E. G. P. Wyatt. The Plainsong and Mediæval Music Society, 44 Russell Square, W.C. 1. pp. 168—175.

[7] Nouvelle Edition revue, 1895. Ch. III., p. 82.

[8] Bäumer, Vol. I., p. 321.

seems to have been established. It is probable in itself, for Gregory was a powerful man. He was a reformer, an active missionary who well knew the part literary work must play in evangelising. He knew, too, the value of reverent and imposing ceremonies and, we can hardly doubt when we read the story of the landing of Augustine in Kent, of the power of music.[9] Anyhow, the *scholae cantorum* were there after his time. They were almost necessary for good singing when so little was written and so much depended on tradition. They formed training grounds for many of the future clergy.[10] The singing taught in them was professional and corporate. Another factor was at work. One of Gregory's first reforms was to turn out place-seeking laymen from the papal household and to fill their places with monks who were more amenable to discipline. He himself was a lover of the monastic life and never ceased to regret the calm and the leisure for study that it had afforded him in earlier years. He established a Benedictine monastery on the Coelian hill. The parish churches were often entrusted to monks. As a natural result the idea of corporate, professional worship received a second impulse.

This Gregorian reform represented, then, a survival of the ancient civilisation. It was a conservative work. It consisted in codifying, collecting and preserving, amid the general decline. But it did not so strike outsiders. Men from the uncivilised North were struck on visiting Rome with the magnificence of her churches and the beauty of her music. They did not contrast it with her former glory of which they knew nothing, but with their own present

[9] Bede, *Hist. Eccles*, I. 25.

[10] Wagner, p. 191. Batiffol, p. 40. The epitaph of Pope Liberius mentions that as a boy he had never been heard to read wrong words wilfully or to change the holy text for the amusement of his giddy companions. Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, p. 348.

backwardness. Rome represented to them new ideas, progress and reform.

This was perhaps specially true of England and of her people whose conversion had been so near Gregory's heart. Benedict Biscop (A.D. 628—690), for instance, the abbot of Wearmouth and the teacher of Bede, made five journeys to Rome. He got thence the plan for his abbey church, great volumes of sacred books, pictures to go all round its walls, and statues both for the church and the monastery.[11] But specially he was interested in singing, which implied the whole rendering of the services. He gathered the monks of the different monasteries together at Wearmouth, and they continued to meet while he was away on his journey, so that on one occasion, only old abbot Ceolfrid and a little boy, were left behind; they had therefore to sing the office without antiphons though they did their best to put them in at Vespers and Lauds.[12] He sent to Canterbury and got two singers to teach his men at Ripon, but his great triumph was when on his visit to Rome in 678, he got permission from Pope Agathon to bring back John, the chief cantor from St. Peter's, to teach his own monks and any others that the various monasteries would send to Wearmouth.[13]. Before John went back he left a copy of an Ordo for all the festivals of the year, which was still in existence when Bede wrote. A similar movement was going on elsewhere, and one which owed its importance to the growth of the Frankish kingdom. The way in which it came to be the chief power in the West till the Western Empire was revived by the crowning of Charles the Great, at Rome, in the year 800, can perhaps best be realised by looking at the successive pages of an historical atlas, and noticing how, in the patchwork of powers through the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries,

[11] Bede, *Vit. Abbat,* I. 9. Migne P.L. XCIV. 720.
[12] Bäumer, Vol. I., p. 325.
[13] *Hist. Eccles.* IV., 16 (18).

the colour which stands for the Franks appears, grows and spreads, till it covers nearly the whole of Western Europe.

Typical of the movement in the Church in the Frankish kingdom was the work of Chrodegang, Bp. of Metz. He had been brought up at the court of Charles Martel, the *Major Domus* and virtual ruler of the people rather than the Merovingian king, who freed Europe from the menace of the Saracens at Poitiers in 730. Chrodegang was a man of character and ability, "accomplished both in his native language and in Latin," which was the common language of all educated men. He was first made chancellor and then, by the appointment of Pepin, Bishop of Metz. He held the bishoprick together with the civil office, thus beginning "that long series of ecclesiastics holding high temporal office at court which terminated in Europe with the seventeenth century."[14]

His great work was the reform of the clergy. He insisted on their attending synodical meetings regularly and got them, where possible, to live together in clergy houses under a modified monastic rule. This was specially his care in his cathedral at Metz, where he laid the foundation of the system of canons as distinct from the ordinary clergy. Part of his scheme for disciplining the irregular and turbulent northern element was the enforcement of the Roman method of singing. "He instructed them in Roman chanting," we read. He ordered them to keep the custom and order of the Roman church (*Romana cantilena imbuit. Morem ac ordinem Romanae ecclesiae servare praecepit*).

The Frankish kingdom was extended under Charles the Great. The story how he delivered the Pope from the Lombards and revived the Western Empire can be read in the pages of Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*. Its political significance is there fully discussed. For

[14] *Dict. Christ. Biog.* Art. *Chrodegang.*

us the thing to remark is Charles' interest in education and in matters of the Church. He brought Alcuin from England to found his school at the court and delighted in taking part in the discussions and puzzling his teacher with hard questions. Similar schools were established at the cathedrals, and this small beginning influenced the whole of mediæval thought, as from it were developed the Universities and the scholastic philosophy. His biographer tells us how he would take active part in the services, giving the signal for the reader of the lessons to begin and to leave off,[15] how he would pay surprise visits to the different choirs and noted the variations in their singing, how he sent for teachers from the choir of Metz, and asked for skilled chanters from Rome with correct music books. In all this, his aim was to insist on Roman methods, partly from his admiration of things Roman and partly because Gallicanism was synonymous with disorder in church and state.

The result was seen in the rise of a school and science of liturgiology. Feeling often rose high. John the deacon, as strong upholder of the Roman method said rude things about the northern peoples—"Barbarism is their natural inheritance. From their huge bodies they bellow out the psalmody like the echo of a storm. No! They cannot render the sweetness of the Roman chant; they can only learn it and learn it again to spoil it. What else can you expect from the barbarous roughness of these spongy gullets."[16] Still the Roman customs did not absolutely win the day. Amalarius, a disciple of Alcuin had visited Constantinople and had known Eastern rites. On his return to Metz he noticed various differences between what was practised and what was set down in the books, so he went to Rome to study the Roman use at its source. There he found that even at Rome there had been changes since the days of Chrodegang.

[15] Eginhard. Vit. Carol, XXVI. Migne P.L. XCVII., 50, 97.
[16] Quoted Bäumer, Vol. I., p. 334.

He therefore set about compiling a new book, selecting from different sources what seemed to him best and justifying his proceeding by quoting the advice of Gregory to Augustine, to choose anything that he found good anywhere.[17]

To explain his methods he wrote two books. His *De Ecclesiasticis Officiis*, which dealt chiefly with the Mass and the Church Seasons, and his *De Ordine Antiphonarii*, dealing with the Choir Office. It is from these works that we get for the first time full details of different parts of the service, of the methods of chanting, and of the words of the antiphons and responds. It is marred by a symbolism run wild. He tells us that a respond for Wednesday in Holy Week has five verses because Adam had five senses which died and revived in Christ, that another had four because Christ's body was composed of four elements; but he is interested in the artistic side of common worship and has considerable knowledge of the Fathers. We have here for the first time the rise of a developed liturgical science. The form of the office is practically fixed. The appeal is largely antiquarian and to the past. It is settled for the present by authority, *de haut en bas*, and it has in view, primarily, the customs of worship in monastic and capitular bodies.

The after history of the Divine office is difficult to summarise. It suffered no essential change though it was modified in a hundred details. It can be found described in any history of monasticism.[18] In books on the Prayer Book, references to mediæval custom are generally given a prominence out of all proportion to their significance. After all, the history of what has issued in the present day Roman Breviary rather than in our Matins and Evensong really concerns us

[17] Migne P.L. CV. 1244. Bäumer, Vol. I., p. 400ff. F. Cabrol, *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie et de Liturgie*. Art. Amalaire.

[18] E.g., R. Church, *St. Anselm* (Macmillan: 1871), Ch. III. Discipline of a Norman Monastery.

little. In it, however, can be discerned two tendencies which are noteworthy, namely, that to elaboration, and the counter movement towards simplicity. These are of importance because they led to the change of the Reformation and are tendencies which re-appear continually in our midst to-day.

Saints' days became popular in the monasteries. They gave variety to a monotonous round. New music was written for them especially for the commemorations of local saints. These compositions would, in turn, be borrowed, by other monasteries, and with the music would go the observance of the feast. Metrical antiphons were written and for these new feasts were necessary as the old ones had their established compositions.[19]

Moreover, piety prompted the adding of new offices. The natural instinct is to add to your devotions if you feel you are becoming over-familiar with the old. Just as travellers, jaded with sight-seeing, make the mistake of hurrying to larger cities or to more impressive mountains, instead of going slower and looking at the flowers by the roadside as Ruskin advises, so a remedy for accidie was sought in longer prayers. The office of the Virgin began to be added about the year 1000. The office for the dead (as distinct from the primitive custom of Eucharists) is first mentioned by Amalarius. All Souls' Day appears in 1049. The Eucharistic controversies issue in the observance of Corpus Christi in 1264, and Aquinas writes his fine hymns for the feast. The seven Dolours of the Virgin receive their commemoration in 1423. Votive offices spring out of votive masses. Psalms and litanies and memorials are added.[20] Elaborate rules have to be made to decide the precedence of the various feasts when two coincide. The different ceremonies each are entitled to have to be apportioned.

Side by side with this, and not unnaturally, is

[19] Wagner, p. 60. Bäumer, Vol. II., pp. 89, 95, 109, 116, etc.

[20] Bäumer, Vol. II., pp. 100, etc.

found the tendency to simplification. The saint's day services were often shorter than the ferial offices. The same music did for all, so there was less to practice. The psalms were better known from constant repetition. The constant using of the same melodies led to a fixed form for all saints' days—a *commune Sanctorum*.[21]

It was natural to collate and reduce the number of the many choir books. Breviaries or shorter editions with only the first verses of the psalms were written.[22] The service was often felt to be a burden. Monks were getting into the way of singing the whole set of offices for the day, so as to have done with them. So the lessons were shortened. The hymns were cut down. Moreover, the Friars when they appeared in the thirteenth century were constantly travelling about. They could not carry a whole library with them. Simpler forms had to be devised. In the twelfth to the sixteenth century the clergy became more and more generally trained at the Universities instead of the cloister, and so lost the tradition of the full choir service, just as those of our clergy who have never been at a Theological College find it harder to appreciate the value of our daily service. Moreover, in the Babylonish Captivity, when the Pope lived at Avignon, the Lateran basilica ceased to be the model for the world. This left men more free to follow their natural inclinations, and those inclinations were conditioned by the fact that their lives were lived together in the monasteries and cathedrals and the service was that of a close corporation speaking not the vernacular but the language of the past and of scholars.[23]

III.

The mediæval service is not difficult to reconstruct —indeed, it can be seen to-day with little essential change in any foreign monastery or cathedral. The

[21] Wagner, p. 178. [22] Baumer, Vol. II., p. 64.
[23] *Ibid.* pp. 22, 23, 67, 68, 87—90.

background of architecture is familiar to us; we have only to clear out the benches which crowd up the space in front of the stalls in any of our own cathedrals, and to restore the painting on the walls and stained glass in the windows to have the buildings as they were. The great Choirs—for we must think always of cathedrals and abbeys, not of parish churches—with their clusters of flanking chapels, are typical of the old office with its simple order for feasts and ferias, round which the various saints day commemorations had grown up even to the obscuring of the great dignified plan of the original. We can imagine the monks in their rows of stalls, the special stall for the abbot, the space in the midst with its desks for readers and singers, with the lights by them lit for the midnight service.

A full description of the service would take us too long. The following passage describing the end of Matins will perhaps give us a good general idea of its nature:—

"If the Abbot was to sing the twelfth lesson, or to take part in a responsory, or other portion of the service, as he did on great festivals, the cantor had to come with the Abbot's chaplain and others to his stall, bringing the necessary books with lights carried by servers, and the cantor in a low voice was to assist him in the singing. On feasts with twelve lessons, whilst the Te Deum was being chanted, preparations were made for the solemn singing of the portion of the Gospel selected for the office of the day. The church servants brought into the choir a portable reading desk, which they placed at the steps leading to the presbytery. Others brought a cope of the colour of the day, with an amice, stole, and maniple. Meanwhile, the sacrist had fetched the book of the Gospels with some solemnity from the altar, and had placed it on the desk, where the cantor was waiting to find the proper place. Having done so, at the indicated verse in the Te Deum, the cantor went to the stall

of the hebdomadarian of the Mass, and bowing to him, conducted him to the desk, assisted him to vest, and pointed out to him the place in the Holy Gospels that had to be sung or read. Meanwhile, the servers had come into the choir, from the sacristy, with incense and lights, and when the Te Deum was concluded, all turned towards the priest whilst he chanted the appointed Gospel, and finished Matins with the prayer of the day."[24]

Then, when we have got the background and a general sense of the nature of the service, we may turn to the Breviary itself, or, if we cannot read Latin, to the scheme of the service to be found in any work on the Prayer Book.[25] But we need to exercise our imagination first; otherwise it is of little use to learn that the Psalter was arranged for the week with special psalms for each of the seven services every day, that Matins had three sets of psalms called nocturns, each with its antiphon, followed by lessons and responds. These details are, by themselves, only the dry bones of liturgiology. We want rather to look at the contents of the four volumes in which the Breviary is generally bound, and get some impression of the extraordinary richness of the whole; to notice the decrees at the beginning witnessing to its long history, to look at the Calendar commemorating saints of old and gradually built up through the ages; to study the rubrics, the outcome of long practical experience; to see how the psalms and lessons have been adapted to ferial and festal use, to commemorate the dead, or to serve as votive prayers. Then, in detail, we should note the beauty of the choice of antiphons and the ingenuity in composition

[24] *English Monastic Life*, by Abbot Gasquet, O.S.B., D.D., Ph.D., D. Litt., F.R.Hist.S. (Methuen, *The Antiquary's Books*. Fourth Ed. 1910) p. 114.

[25] E.g., F. Procter and W. H. Frere, *A New History of the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 352 (Macmillan: 1905). L. Pullan, *The Book of Common Prayer* (Longmans: Oxford Library of Practical Theology, 1900) pp. 148–153.

of the responds, and, remembering all the music and ceremonial that went with them, try to form some idea of the whole wealth of lyric, literary, and musical art involved in the whole.

But, alas, all this worth and beauty is hidden in a dead language, the possession of an aristocracy. Cut off from the vigour of popular church life, the mediæval breviary has lost an element of catholicity. Consequently, much of it is dead even for those who know Latin. The practical result may be seen in any Roman Catholic Cathedral where the Canons and singers chant the Divine Office with unimpaired dignity in the choir, while the people, unable to understand it, are in a side chapel before the Blessed Sacrament, engaged in saying the Rosary, or in merely private devotions.

IV.

What, then, can we learn from the Middle Ages to guide us to-day?

In the first place, the service is a corporate act. It requires at least two officiants, and these should be in official dress. Where there is no staff of clergy a rota of laymen could surely be arranged for, as servers are arranged for the Daily Eucharist. In large parishes the whole staff should be in their stalls taking part. This duty should have been learned in the daily corporate life of a theological college as a necessary part of training for Holy Orders. Where possible, the officials should be arranged in double choirs to carry out the antiphonal rendering of the service. As many as possible should be brought in to enhance the dignity of the whole—different readers for the two lessons, attendants (at any rate on festivals) like the vergers in cathedrals accompanying the movements of principals, musicians, singers and conductors or leaders of the singing at their desks, in the centre, vested and moving with dignity, thurifers and acolytes when incense is used.

For this there should be a proper stage. The

service should always be said in the chancel and not in a side chapel unless it is fitted up as a smaller choir. Each member of the staff should be in his own stall. There should be sufficient space for freedom of motion and for elaboration of ceremonial. In England this elaboration will probably be mainly literary and musical. We are less dramatic and plastic than Italians, but the element of drill, motion, and pose should not be ignored. This implies that our chancels should be built on a much larger scale than is at present customary, on the pattern of cathedrals and not of mediæval parish churches. They might even be larger in proportion to the naves than are those of our cathedrals, as we use them for large double choirs.

Our choirs, too, should be set much further back than is customary so as to flank the altar on either side. Our present crowded arrangements, which force the front row of boys to sing into one another's faces is destructive of all sense of reverence and reality of worship. It is not fair to put them in such a position and then blame them for irreverence.

But a chancel is not a mere place to sing in; indeed, many are badly adapted for singers. It must be large enough to contain stalls for other officials or men who merit the honour of a place there. It must be spacious enough to avoid any unseemly crowding, and to make it unnecessary to seat acolytes, or strange preachers, in the sanctuary merely because there is no room elsewhere.

Just as the inner worship of the heart expresses itself in the bearing of the body, so bodily reverence further externalises itself into the surroundings of the worshipper, adding a solemnity to his dignified bearing by richly carved stalls, painted walls, clustering pillars and groined roof—the "frozen music"[26] of architecture which continues its unwearied harmony

[26] An expression of Schelling's but referred by Schopenhauer to Goethe. B. Bosanquet, *History of Aesthetic*, p. 367. It has also been attributed to Schlegel. *Ibid.* p. 420.

day and night, and carries on, without ceasing, the worship of God, after the chanters are silenced and the officiants have gone their way. This is a conception of praise little grasped by the English but quite familiar to the Italian with his stronger power of visualisation, and long familiarity with an inheritance of art.

Again, the Divine Office is not understood till it is realised that it is primarily meant to be sung, or rather, chanted.[27] At least it should never be mumbled or read as if addressed to the congregation. It should be spared the indignity of the so-called "natural voice," which is quite unnatural in solemn address to Almighty God. Over-elaboration, as we saw, must be avoided, but in the reaction from Anglican chants[28] the rendering of the service must not become casual. Even the lessons were still solemnly chanted, at least in places, as late as the seventeenth century.[29]

For the enrichment of the Office we need the restoration of antiphons for the psalms, and of some form of response to the lessons, and with both, of course, the composition of the music to which they should be sung. That is, we need greater variety and wealth of idea. Such would serve to mark the differences of festivals and seasons. At present we have little more for this purpose than the harmonising of

[27] E. B. Tyler, *Anthropology* (Macmillan: 1881), p. 290. "To read or recite poetry as we moderns do is to alter its nature, for the purpose of poetry was to be chanted. But this very chanting or singing grew out of talking.—The intoning in our churches arose from the same natural utterance of religious feeling, but in course of time became fixedly custom, and was forced into the regular intervals of the musical scale." See below, p. 110.

[28] C. V. Stanford, *Pages from an Unwritten Diary*, p. 242. "Another distinguished visitor (to Cambridge) was Dvoràk, who was nearly driven crazy by the chanting of the psalms, which he thought simply a barbarous repetition of a poor tune."

[29] The rubric in the Prayer Book ordering the Lessons to "be sung to a plain tune" was omitted after the Savoy Conference. In 1661 the custom had apparently died out.

the responses, the variation of hymns, and the addition of processions. There is a real danger that, owing to the lack of such adaptation, for instance, in Lent and Holy Week, the Divine Office may be neglected for inferior popular devotions as was the case in the middle ages. Too often, metrical litanies and unnecessary sermons and addresses, are substituted for the offices for the day at the very seasons when it should be rendered with the utmost solemnity of which it is capable.

Finally, it is surely quite wrong to depress the Divine Office in the supposed interests of the Mass. This is deliberately to do what the Church in the middle ages was only forced to do by necessity. If due proportion is observed, to enrich the Choir Office is to add dignity to that of which it is the preparation and the setting. The problem of the revival of variety and dignity of worship has been successfully solved since the Tractarian Revival in the case of the Eucharist, but the corresponding task in the case of the Choir Office has barely been touched.

CHAPTER IV.

MATINS AND EVENSONG SINCE THE REFORMATION.

"The first and second bell
That every day at four and ten
Cry, Come, come, come to prayers."
—DEAN ALDRICH: Catch "*The Bonny Christ Church Bells*."

AT the Reformation, the English Church was faced with a difficult problem. The Divine Office had long ceased to be a people's service; it was in a dead language and had become over-elaborated. She had, therefore, to translate its prayers and simplify its composition.

I.

The work of mere translation was, no doubt, difficult, but that difficulty was one that could be met. There was already a growing number of primers, or books of private devotion, in the vernacular. Versions of the Bible in the speech of the people had already appeared. The English language was forming and was soon to see its first great harvest of literature, while Cranmer, who did most of the work, was a master of style.

But he was faced with a harder task of translation than that of mere turning of Latin phrases into common speech, namely, the task of translating the whole Office, foreign in origin and aristocratic by development, into a different type of service that should be popular and English in thought and feeling. Moreover, he had to do it at once, whereas the old phrases had grown gradually as they were modified, or built up on the lips of men, by constant use through ages, and the forms had been gradually evolved by the

piety of generation succeeding generation, each with its legacy from the past. Such a change involved a dislocation of the old in more than words, while to make matters harder, none of the existing music would do for the new language with its different rhythm, nor were the metres of the old hymns suitable for the new tongue.

The gradual change as the forming nations of modern Europe became articulate had been accompanied by the invention and spread of printing. Books, though still expensive, were becoming more common possessions, and could now be of smaller bulk. Not unnaturally, therefore, the idea proved attractive of getting all that was needed into one volume. The old collections of manuscript tomes for Mass, Divine Office, for occasional needs and for the Bishop's use, the missals, graduals, Epistle and Gospel books, psalters, antiphonaries, lectionaries, manuals, processionals, ordinals, pontificals, were now to give way to two—a Book of Common Prayer (soon to be bound up with the Ordinal) and the Bible.

There had, as we saw, been a slow process of simplification and condensation going on through the middle ages from which resulted the Breviary, but it had been a work of time. Now drastic measures were adopted. The Office itself, which had become a burden to clerics and unintelligible to the people, was of necessity made simple in a way that involved much loss. All the old antiphons and responds had to go; the legends of the saints and the excerpts from the Fathers disappeared. The calendar, a growth of 1,500 years was rapidly recast. An entirely new distribution of the Psalter over one month in two services a day was made. A complete re-arrangement of the lessons from the Bible had to be worked out. As, moreover, similar changes had to be made in all the other offices, it is little wonder that much was left undone, that our rubrics are still unsettled, and our Order for the Burial of the Dead is a mere collection of fragments.

Besides all this, the age was obsessed with the idea of uniformity. It is at least doubtful if uniformity in public worship is in accord with human nature, or desirable; at any rate, the question cannot be settled off-hand. Rome, it is true, has always worked for, and boasted of, uniformity; she has pursued a steady policy of crushing out local uses, but even after persistent efforts for over 1,000 years she has not been entirely successful. But at the Reformation in England an attempt was made to bring all to one pattern in a few years, and that mainly by Acts of Parliament.[1] The whole history of the action of the civil power in religious matters throughout the age of the Reformation is odious. We are told of this period that Bp. Creighton groaned over the way its glamour disappeared with increased knowledge. "As for the Tudors," he wrote, "they are odious. I really do not think that anyone ought to read the history of the sixteenth century."[2]

Such changes constituted a reconstruction of the Divine Office rather than a reform, but even a reconstruction was not impossible. The work was in the hands of scholars familiar with liturgical principles, men who had been brought up to take part in the old services, who had lived in an unbroken tradition of worship. It is only by such practical experience that a sound liturgical sense is acquired, and Cranmer was prompted by such a sense to go boldly back to the principle of two services daily. Later on, when the tradition had been broken, it was almost impossible to acquire this feeling for liturgical fitness, as witness the almost complete failures of later attempts to compose offices or even to write prayers. Antiquarian study, even in the case of men like Andrews, Cosin, or Bingham, could do very little beyond preventing mistakes; even when coupled with strong

[1] Cf. H. C. Dowdall, in the *Prayer Book Dictionary* (Pitman: 1912), Art. *Acts of Uniformity*.

[2] *Life and Letters of Mandell Creighton*, by his wife (Longmans: 1906), Vol. I., p. 288.

historic imagination, as in the case of many of our modern ritualists, it is apt to produce results often beautiful but artificial and lifeless, and it has little power as compared with even a superficial familiarity with living rites as found on the Continent.

Much was done by these English Reformers who were men of the New Learning, and, in time, what had to be sacrificed at first might have been similarly reconstructed in a new form, had not yet another change been attempted, namely, that of making the Divine Office the *chief* people's service instead of the Mass, a thing never before dreamed of, except for catechumens and the heathen, in the whole of the Church's history. This was a fundamental change, and perhaps not unnaturally was only really at all successful in the Colleges and Cathedrals. Here the old mediæval conception of the service as one offered by a corporate body was carried on, and a new aristocracy in the Church grew up, not now so much of piety or even of station, as of learning and intellect. What to a very real extent met the religious needs of the educated, failed in the case of the parish churches of the people, though, thanks to the genius of Cranmer, the actual form of service remained, at any time, capable of resuscitation to popular life. "Indeed," writes Dr. Frere, "it is only in the last half century that Cranmer's plans have had a chance of being realised."[3]

Still, even such a fundamental change might have been successfully carried out if, in addition to all that we have mentioned, another obstacle had not arisen. With the substitution of Matins for Mass, the main idea that we come to church to worship was left untouched, but from Geneva there came a rival theory of church-going—that its purpose was to hear sermons. This new idea was furthered by certain effects of the translation of the Bible and the

[3] *Some Principles of Liturgical Reform* (Murray: 1911), p. 79.

theories of inspiration that accompanied it. Since all was considered of equal importance as the Word of God, and the Old Testament was by far the larger in bulk, Judaic puritanism gained sway over the people. At the same time, the re-discovery of St. Paul, the great missionary, whose epistles read badly in Latin, emphasised the evangelical and theological side of Christianity at the expense of the devotional and mystic side that draws its life from the Gospels. This conception of church-going received a yet stronger impetus from the evangelical movement two centuries later, and to this day it is the accepted theory in Protestant Switzerland and Prussia, Scandinavia, Holland and Scotland, and among English and American Nonconformists. A theory that almost seems to lay claim to a rival catholicity as this does, is not lightly to be dismissed as of no account. Few realise how, even in our own Church, this idea is ingrained in the minds of men, or how disastrous are its effects in preventing the understanding of our Prayer Book.

II.

Attempts at reformation had already been made abroad. At the Revival of Learning humanists had objected to the Latin in the Breviary; they declared it barbarous and made attempts to classicise it.[4] Others more conscious of impending troubles, and to meet a not altogether inexcusable slackness in saying its long and many Offices, had set about a more fundamental reform. In 1529, Clement V. approached a Spanish Franciscan prelate, Cardinal Quignonez, and asked him to prepare a revised breviary. The result of his work was published in 1535. He had recast the whole, making a new division of the Psalter by apportioning three psalms to each office and so shortening the long service of Matins with

[4] Batiffol, pp. 178—181. Bäumer, Vol. II., pp. 114—125.

its three nocturns often of three psalms each; lengthening the lessons but reducing their number to three, one from the Old Testament, one from the New and one from the legends of the saints or the writings of the Fathers; and simplifying the whole by suppressing versicles, little chapters, and responds. Its purpose, as he explained in the preface, was threefold. It was to serve the priest in praying as intermediary between God and man; it was to protect him in his personal life and make him an example to the flock, and it was to instruct him in the scriptures which it is his duty to study.

The work had an immediate success and rapidly passed through six editions. But it failed ultimately to commend itself. It seemed meagre and bald after the richness of the old forms, yet its changes were not great enough to constitute a new start. It was still in Latin and no attempt was made to popularise its offices. It was not intended for use in choir. To break with the past and to reconstruct for the future required the vigour of a new nation, and of one willing to pay the price. Quignonez' reforms failed, though they paved the way for those of Pius V. and of the Council of Trent. These do not concern us. The importance of the Spanish experiment is that it influenced Cranmer. Its ideas and many of its expressions can be clearly traced in our Preface " Concerning the Services of the Church."[5]

With the changes made in England we are familiar. Our present Matins and Evensong represent, with little alteration, the work of Cranmer. The stages by which the changes were worked out can be found in draft forms and in the easily accessible reprints of the first and second Prayer Books of Edward VI. Such drastic changes as were made were only possible by violent action of authority; they were not spontaneous growths and were never really accepted by the mass of the people. A heavy price was paid for

[5] Procter and Frere, p. 309.

reform. To the Romanist party the new book must have appeared to contain mere mangled remains of the old Offices.

But for all that, Cranmer was guided by a sure liturgical sense. The seven hours of prayer, never really observed for long, were compressed into two in obedience to a natural human instinct. "The custom" he says, "of praying seven times a day has long since ceased and we now only assemble twice a day for prayers."[6] The psalm cursus was extended from the week to the month. The lessons were lengthened. The Creed and the Lord's Prayer were given their present place. This sense of liturgical structure which subordinated the Old Testament to the New, and made the psalms and lessons lead up to the climax of profession of faith and of prayer, at once appeals to men's sense of devotion. There is a rhythm in the whole service which is absent in the Breviary Offices. The later prayers of the Caroline Divines are fine but redundant. The puritan proposals to make the Litany into one long prayer and to lengthen the collects to make them more effecting would have been disastrous. Cranmer had a sense of fitting style. He wrote when the English language was just forming itself. He even improved upon the Latin originals in his translations of the collects.[7]

Owing to the substitution of Matins for the Mass as the people's service, the post-reformation history of the English Matins and Evensong becomes that of public worship as a whole. It is largely a story of opposition on the part of the Puritans, who had a rival theory of church-going because they had a rival theory of the church, and a rival theory of the church because they had a rival theory of religion itself.

[6] H. Wickham Legg, *Cranmer's Liturgical Projects*. Henry Bradshaw Society, 1915, p. 22. See also *The Hours of Prayer* in the *English Church Review*, Dec., 1916, p. 564. See below, p. 78.

[7] J. Dowden, *The Workmanship of the Prayer Book*. (Methuen: 1899), especially Ch. XI., The Collects, p. 119.

They were Calvinists, believers in predestination; the Church was to them the body of the elect; and they had no place for prelates or priests.

The story of this Puritan opposition can be read in any history of the Prayer Book. The main body of exiles in Queen Mary's reign went to Frankfurt where they were allowed to share a church with the French Protestants on condition of conforming to their order.[8] This the majority refused to do and migrated to Basel and Geneva, where they came under the influence of Swiss Calvinism. They returned on the accession of Queen Elizabeth who found herself, on coming to the throne, in opposition to the mass of Divines on either side. Convocation was opposed to any change. The returned exiles were for an entire break with the past. A conference at Westminster led to nothing. The Uniformity Act of 1559 re-established the Second Edwardian Prayer Book with certain significant alterations. It was passed at once in the Commons, but in the Lords only by a bare majority of three.[9]

The Act was passed, but the difficulty was to get it obeyed. In 1564 the Elizabethan Injunctions (i.e., orders by the Sovereign) were issued.[10] In 1565 they were followed by the Bishops' interpretations of them. They aimed at getting some sort of order into public worship, and in 1566 the Advertisements were issued by Parker to ensure at least a minimum of observance. These attempts were met by steady resistance. First the "Prophesyings" were organised, nominally to supply the lack of preaching, really with the ultimate aim of abolishing episcopacy. They

[8] See *A brieff discourse off the troubles begonne at Francford in Germany*, 1575, published by the Parker Society, 1908. Pullan, p. 112. Procter and Frere, p. 93. Ollard and Crosse, *Dictionary of English Church History* (Mowbray: 1912. Art. *Marian Exiles*).

[9] Cardwell's *History of Conferences*, p. 20.

[10] *Prayer Book Dictionary*. Art. *Injunctions*.

were suppressed in 1577.[11] Then followed the literary war. It began indeed before. The First and Second *Admonition to Parliament*—the second work by Thomas Cartwright—constituted a systematic and ordered attack on the Prayer Book and all that it involved. This was popularised later in 1587 by the Martin Marprelate tracts specially designed to make the bishops look ridiculous.

> "In all their order of service," wrote Cartwright, "there is no edification, according to the rule of the Apostles, but confusion, they tosse the psalmes in most places like tennice balls. The people, some standing, some walking, some talking, some reading, some praying by themselves, attend not to the minister. He againe posteth it over as fast as he can gallop.... As for organes and curious singing, thoughe they be proper, to popishe dennes, I mean to Cathedrall Churches, yet some others also must have them. The Queenes chappell, and these churches must be patternes and president to the people, of all superstitions."[12]

The position was serious. Rome, defeated for the moment, but to become a serious rival again later, had a valuable and reasoned tradition. Equally clear and logical was the voice of Calvinism. More was needed than Erastian state action. A counter literary propaganda, led by a man of constructive imagination, with a true conception of the aims of controversy was needed, and that man was found in Hooker. He "first revealed to the nation what English prose might be"[13] in his eight books of his Ecclesiastical Polity, which he lived, we are told, to see:—

> "perfected, and though like Rachael, he died, as it

[11] W. H. Frere, *History of the English Church in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I.* (Macmillan: 1904, p. 169).

[12] W. H. Frere and C. E. Douglas, *Puritan Manifestoes: An Admonition to Parliament.* Church Historical Society Publications, No. LXII.: S.P.C.K., p. 29.

[13] R. Church in his *Introduction to Hooker*, Bk. I. (Clarendon Press) p. xix.

were, in travail of them, and hastened death upon himself, by hastening to give them life, yet he held out to behold with his own eyes these *partus ingenii*, these Benjamins, sons of his right hand, though to him they were Benonies, sons of pain and sorrow."[14]

Hooker was able to appeal to educated people, to the world of Shakespeare and Bacon, to the classes among which the Church has been strong ever since. But style is of no use without matter, and he gained his power by going to fundamentals, "wading through the whole cause, following the method that searcheth for truth by the causes of truth."[15] His aim was to reason and not merely to score, to convince and not just to confute. In the eighteenth and following chapters of the Fifth Book he discusses the various points that have to do with Matins and Evensong. He speaks of the place of reading in public worship "a special portion of the service which we do to God" and not merely a means of instructing the people;[16] of the false idea of "no sermon, no service, which idea" occasioned the French spitefully to term religion in that sort exercised a mere 'preach'";[17] of prayer and set forms rather than the "irksome deformities" of endless and senseless "effusions of indigested prayers";[18] of gestures and attire, pointing out that little things gain a dignity from their use and that it is a pity that "so mean a thing as a vestment should from the very service of God withdraw their hearts and affections";[19] of the length of the service and the harm of "over-quick despatch of duty";[20] as well as of details, of the repetition of the Lord's Prayer, than which nothing else is of "like continual use and force";[21] of the "confused noise"

[14] To the reader. Hooker's Works, Ed. Keble, Vol. I., p. 123.
[15] Epistle Dedicatorie to Bk. V.
[16] XIX. 5.
[17] XXVIII. 3.
[18] XXV. 5.
[19] XXIX. 4.
[20] XXXII. 2.
[21] XXXV. 3.

when people repeat prayers with the minister (that is if they mumble, and, to use Isaac Walton's expression "muddle up the prayers,")[22] of the use of the psalms which "do both more briefly contain and more movingly express the choice and flower of all things profitable in other books,"[23] and of music,

> "a thing which delighteth all ages and beseemeth all states; a thing as seasonable in grief as in joy; as decent being added unto actions of greatest weight and solemnity, as being used when men most sequester themselves from action."[24]

Hooker saved the position. His influence can be traced in the after story of the English Church, in the prayers of Andrewes and the practical work of Laud. As we read the Ecclesiastical Polity we are struck, in spite of its magnificent but involved Elizabethan prose of the modernity of it all. The same principles are at stake to-day. To a large extent our controversies turn round the same details.

III.

The natural unsuitableness of Matins as a people's service explains the large measure of Puritan success. The spirit of devotion and worship survived long by tradition, but the official form of service could not really interpret it. Moreover, in the eighteenth century, the Church, allied by tradition to the aristocracy of birth and learning, failed, while Wesleyan evangelicalism succeeded. She did not adapt herself to the industrial revolution; and lost even such touch as she had with the masses. Consequently, for nearly three centuries the history of the English Divine Office is a record of failure.

To illustrate this, let us take three examples. George Herbert wrote his *A Priest to the Temple*, or *Countrey Parson*, about the year 1632. He represents the ideal of the time of Andrewes and Laud, when the influence of Hooker was making itself felt.

[22] XXXVI. 1 note. [25] XXXVII. 2.
[24] XXXVIII. 1.

In his description of the Parson in his church and parish we get a definitely English type first clearly appearing.

It is based on his experience at Bemerton. Isaac Walton, in his life of Herbert, describes how he explained to the congregation the meaning of all the parts of the service, the confession, the psalms, the canticles and the prayers. It is significant that they needed explaining; people who have grown up in a tradition seldom ask for explanations.

In Chapter VI. of *The Countrey Parson*, "The Parson Praying" Herbert tells us how he

> "composeth himself to all possible reverence; lifting up his heart and hands and eyes and using all other gestures which may express a hearty and unfeigned devotion . . . . . his voice is humble, his words treatable and slow; yet not so slow neither, as to let the fervency of the supplicant hang and die between speaking, yet with a grave liveliness, between fear and zeal, pausing yet pressing, he performs his duty . . . . having often instructed his people how to carry themselves in divine service, he exacts of them all possible reverence, by no means enduring either talking, or sleeping, or gazing, or leaning, or half kneeling, or any undutiful behaviour in them."

He sees that they give the Amens and answers,

> "not in a huddling or slubbering fashion, gaping or scratching the head, or spitting even in the midst of an answer, but gently and pausably thinking what they say."

But people to whom a service really means anything do not talk, and sleep, and half kneel, and gape and spit. Nor do "the gentry and nobility of the parish make it a piece of state not to come at the beginning of the service . . . but at mid prayers" unless the service has become a mere form to them. As we see from the rest of the book, the *Countrey Parson* is a charming and saintly man, and there is much about

preaching and "parish work," but worship has practically died out. The people come to church, but merely from custom.

Perhaps even better known than The *Countrey Parson* is the figure of Sir Roger de Coverley in Addison's *Spectators*,[25] who, says the author,

> "has often told me that on coming to his estate found his parishioners very irregular; and that in order to make them kneel and join in the responses, he gave every one of them a hassock and a Common Prayer Book; and at the same time employed an itinerant singing master who goes about the countrey for that purpose to instruct them rightly in the tunes of the psalms."
>
> "As Sir Roger," he continues, "is landlord to the whole congregation, he keeps them in very good order; and will suffer nobody to sleep in it besides himself.... Several other of the old knight's peculiarities break out upon these occasions: sometimes he will be lengthening out a verse, in the singing of the psalms, half a minute after the rest of the congregation have done with it; sometimes, when he is pleased with the matter of his devotion, he pronounces Amen! three or four times to the same prayer; and sometimes stands up when everybody else is upon their knees to count the congregation, or to see if any of his tenants are missing."
>
> "As soon as the sermon is finished, nobody presumes to stir till Sir Roger is gone out of the Church. The knight walks down from his seat in the Chancel between a double row of his tenants that stand bowing to him on each side, and every now and then he enquires how such an one's wife or mother, or son, or father, do, whom he does not see at church; which is understood as a secret reprimand to the person that is absent."

Sir Roger, in fact, is a fine old English gentleman, and a model landlord, but his chaplain who preaches a selection of "all the good sermons which have

[25] No. 112.

been printed in English"—"the Bishop of St. Asaph in the morning and Dr. South in the afternoon," was chosen by his patron as a man "rather of plain sense than of much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a sociable temper, and... a man that understood a little of backgammon." The service is a feudal function and is apparently offered at least as much to Sir Roger in the Chancel as to God in heaven.

Devotion is not easily stifled and worship is based on an imperishable instinct in man. At the beginning of the eighteenth century there was a marked church revival, and daily services were common in London. Even as late as 1748, Clarissa Harlowe went to the service at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, every morning, but the false idea that preaching is the main object of church-going has established itself in the fixed arrangement of churches with their "three deckers" —erections consisting of clerk's desk, reading pew, and pulpit, towering above all—set up in the middle of an area blocked with pews. The impossibility of common worship in such surroundings may best be realised from contemporary pictures. Hogarth's "Sleeping Congregation," is, no doubt, meant for a caricature, but the state of things that made such a caricature possible was sufficiently serious. Perhaps, however, pictures that represent what was evidently considered normal and desirable, such as his "Industrious Apprentice," or at a later date, Ackerman's prints of the Foundling, the Magdalen, and the Philanthropic Society's Chapels, show even more clearly how little England understood the true nature of her Prayer Book.[26]

[26] See also Cowper's Essay on *Country Congregations. Pulpit Eloquence. The Tatler*, No. 66. Abbey and Overton. *The English Church in the Eighteenth Century*, Chapter X. *Church Fabric and Services.* Many interesting details will be found in J. Wickham Legg's *English Church Life from the Restoration to the Tractarian Movement*, Ch. IV., observance of the duty of Daily Service, and in *Hierurgia Anglicana* (De la More Press: 1902), Vol. III., pp. 229—242.

IV.

The exception to this depressing story of failure was, as we saw, found in the case of the worship of corporate bodies. In the College chapels of our Universities and in our cathedrals, the services often continued to be rendered with much dignity and reverence.[27] A tradition peculiarly English was established with a not unimportant school of music, which evolved a form of worship, dignified, restrained, intellectual, which is without parallel in Christendom.

It is true that even this merit proved misleading. The Catholic Revival, as was natural, seized on the one genuine living form of Prayer Book worship and made it, by false analogy, a model for parish churches. Double choirs of men and boys were formed, dressed up in surplices, and packed into chancels too small for them, though they were only singers and not a foundation or college, while Anglican chants, suitable perhaps for the flexible voices of trained choirs whose members sang together every day, have proved quite unsuitable for congregational use (at any rate, as far as men are concerned) and are a serious hindrance to the understanding of the words sung.

Still, the last eighty years, it must be acknowledged, have seen a wonderful recovery of the choir office as a popular service, especially in the case of Evensong. There has been a considerable growth in the dignity and reverence with which it is rendered, though, owing to the lack of clear ideas as to its history and nature, this development has not, it must be confessed, been nearly so marked or so successful, as the corresponding growth in the ceremonial of the Eucharist.

[27] Edmund Bertram in 1814 had "not yet left Oxford long enough to forget what chapel prayers are." Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*, Ch. IX.

CONCLUSION.

We began our study of the Divine Office by noticing the opportunity of the English Church in her possession of a form of service suitable for private, for popular, and for corporate use. We have seen why this opportunity has been missed. Various reforms in these three directions—personal, popular and corporate—have been suggested; now the problem is to combine these three types of suggestions, and to notice how the needs of each must modify the methods of the others.

Our Daily Office is suitable for private use, but such a use is exceptional and a modification of a fuller practice. Therefore, as the rubric directs, when said privately, it should, if possible, be said in church. Further, it should be said by the priest in his stall in the quire, in order to retain, as far as possible, the connection with the solemn corporate rendering. For this reason, the stalls in the chancel should be so set and arranged as to make them seem a natural place to use for private prayer. At present they are generally raised and pushed forward into prominence so that the congregation may see and hear the chief officiant, with the result that they have ceased to become natural places to pray in and have become quasi-pulpits. Such stalls would naturally be "returned," or, if set facing one another for antiphonal singing, should be further back at the sides of the chancel than is generally the custom. They would thus become the natural places for the clergy to choose in which to say their preparation before, and thanksgiving after, celebrating at the altar, for their morning meditations, or evening "devotional reading"; places where they would have their library of books

of prayer. This would demand larger and more dignified chancels than are built at present, as each would keep to his own stall, and the stalls themselves would be set further back. There would be less crowding, and it would at once seem natural that they should be carved and decorated, while the associations of private prayer would pass over to the public services and the sanctification of personal religion spread to the singers and the people.

For help in solving the problem of enriching the service without destroying its suitability for the worship of the people we must seek light from history, both from that of the struggle in the fourth and following centuries, and from our failure since the Reformation. To keep the service popular, clear fixed main lines are needed; if these are secured there may be plenty of variation in detail. The people in the nave must become quite familiar with the outline and salient unchangeable parts of the service; the elaborations of lesser features may be invented and carried out by the officials in the quire.

But the advance of education and the invention of printing have made the problem different from that of the Early Church. In those days, people could not be expected to know the psalms by heart, still less to be familiar with the lessons: the longer elements had to be entrusted to priests and singers or readers. All that the people without books could be expected to know were short refrains sung in chorus and grown familiar by use. To-day, on the other hand, the psalms, lessons, canticles and collects are in the people's Prayer Books and Bibles. They constitute the popular elements, fixed, or with well known regular and simple changes which must not be touched or obscured. The lesser elements of antiphons, responds and versicles, formerly the people's part, could now more suitably be revived as varying additions rendered by officials.

Further, the psychology of interest and fatigue tells us that to retain attention there must be variety

within the familiar, and, if possible, recurring opportunities for self-expression. Thus folk-songs generally consist of solo verses varying in content though sung to the same tune with an unchanging chorus after each. A song with a refrain after each line or set of lines, perhaps repeating the last words of the solo line, such as we find among Welsh National melodies and hymns, is even more sure of popular acceptance. So, in elaborating or adding to the Divine Office, care must be taken that the people's part alternates with that of the officials. Thus, if canticles are sung immediately after the lessons, they must be sung by the people and not by the choir alone. So also, if responds are sung by the choir, the canticle which follows must still be sung by the congregation, or by choir and people alternately. If, however, the canticle is enriched by refrains of the nature of antiphons between each verse, the canticle itself may be sung by the choir to a "service."[28] Probably, additions in the form of metrical hymns would be found most in accordance with the English spirit of devotion, and possibly some introduction to, or explanation of, the lessons, on the analogy of the lessons from the Fathers commenting in the third nocturn of the Breviary on the Gospel for the following day, would prove a possible and popular form of enrichment of the Office.

It is essential, again, that the sense of the service as a corporate act should be preserved. Therefore, the work of enrichment, which must at first be experimental, should be undertaken in college chapels and in those of religious orders; perhaps the chapels of theological colleges, where the future clergy are trained, would form the most suitable field of all. In such places, all that was done would be done under the guidance of liturgical experts and students of

[28] I have heard the Magnificat sung in this way at a pilgrimage at Lourdes. The choir sang each verse to a plainsong melody and the pilgrims sang a verse of a popular hymn between each phrase.

history, and license might be given from the Bishops to depart from the strict uniformity of the Prayer Book.

At present, customs are growing up in parish churches which too often are initiated by people who possess neither a trained liturgical sense nor adequate knowledge of liturgical science.

The enrichment of the Office would probably be in four directions. Antiphons to the psalms might well be restored. Each member of the college might make his own collection of sentences appropriate to the psalm itself or to the season, reading or monotoning it before the psalm during his week of precentorship, while the others joined in repeating it at the end. In this way the most suitable might gradually be sifted out and complete sets drawn up. This would merely be repeating the process by which they originally came into existence. Similarly, responds might be added to the lessons, either on the model of the old ones with their changing application of the same phrase, or single sentences from the Bible or Fathers might be added to illuminate the passage to be read or just concluded. Settings for the Collects might be added; they would probably best take the form of a sentence followed by a versicle and response, a form we have already been made familiar with in many modern books. A standard set of office hymns for the days of the week, and for seasons and festivals could gradually be drawn up, thereby repeating the process by which the latin hymns of the Breviary were selected. These should be drawn from the best English poetry, and the old office hymns only retained in the few cases where their intrinsic merit justifies their being preserved. This would naturally all be a work of time. It could not be done with any success by committee sitting round a table, but would come as a growth by a process of natural selection carried on by praying men, and by a survival of the fittest expressions of worship.

Then on special occasions the service could be lengthened and made more solemn while preserving the familiar frame-work. On Sundays when the mass of the people are present the simple form of the present Prayer Book would have to be adhered to. It would be on Sundays that the congregation learned to become familiar with the chief features of the Office, but on great festivals and on solemn commemorations the additions of antiphons, responds and hymns could be made. Penitential elements could be added in Lent, and in Holy Week, instead of being set aside for the unwanted metrical litanies and addresses that often oust the regular Offices, the service might reach its highest point of solemn elaboration.

Other additions might prove feasible. Possibly the Magnificat might be sung by a four part choir and between each verse be farced with popular metrical refrains. The psalms might be sung to settings, provided the people were given some part in them, either singing alternate verses or joining in chorales at intervals. Allegri's *Miserere* gives an example of such a setting. Collects summing up the leading ideas might be added after each psalm, as are found in the Mozarabic psalter, or after each lesson, as in the Latin service for Easter Eve. The lesson might be chanted by different voices, as are the Gospels for Holy Week in the Roman Missal, or they might be broken by solos, choruses and chorales, on the analogy of Bach's Passion Music. Such developments of the Office would give great scope to our musicians as well as to our liturgiologists.

Finally, these developments, built up on the common ground of the present Office, might take various forms in different places. The above suggestions apply to parish churches, the Cathedrals already have their own line along which they might go further. In Home Mission Churches the additions might take the form of simple comments on

the psalms or explanations of the lessons, not, of course, composed *ex tempore*, but carefully drawn up beforehand; while in foreign churches in communion with ours, among oriental or African peoples to whom our collects seem cold and dry, they might be treated as texts and be followed each by a longer and more diffused prayer from old national sources or composed by men of other races who would do for the men of their own blood what the Romans did for the Greek forms of worship, or Cranmer for us with the old Latin prayers.

The Church, we are being told, is in the furnace. It has largely failed in the past, and men are crying out for reform. It is in her public worship that the failure has been most conspicuous, and there is great fear lest by ill advised changes our unique inheritance from the past may be lightly thrown away. True reform must be based on sound knowledge. It must rely on the experience of history and be guided by a sure liturgical sense. It is in the hope that they may do something to point the way that these pages have been written.

APPENDIX

TWICE A DAY.

NOT least in value among the many rewards that the study of history gives to those who read its pages is the opportunity it provides of watching the persistency of certain features of human life. We are enabled to see how, through changes of circumstance, human nature continuously reasserts itself. In the sphere of religion we come to recognize what may be claimed as permanent and Catholic.

The psychology of prayer needs such reverent investigation. There have been treatises enough on its theology. Its art has been learned by saints; a rich literature has been garnered out of the forms that they have framed, and liturgies have grown up from the common life and needs of men. But for those who have to direct public worship, who need a science to guide them in ordering the devotions of the Church, there is a great need, in addition, for knowledge based on investigation of how men have prayed, and of the laws which govern the service that man thus renders to God.

How often should men pray? What is the natural frequency of prayer in common? Has history anything to tell us on this point?

I.

The evidence from the Early Church in the times of her persecution is scanty, and tells us little. In the earliest non-Biblical account of Christian worship, that in the often-quoted letter of Pliny, we find that the Christians met once a week "before dawn on a fixed day," and, after holding their service, used to

separate and meet again, apparently in the evening.[1] Justin Martyr, in his "Apology" (c. 150), describes the Eucharist celebrated in the early hours of Sunday morning, but mentions no other form of common prayer. The "Didache," the earliest (as most think) Christian manual of instruction, and nearly, if not quite, the oldest Christian writing outside the New Testament, speaks of only one service on Sunday. Clement of Alexandria, the first to use his pen for systematic Christian teaching (150—215), speaks of evening prayer, but it is not clear that he refers to a public service.[2] The Canons of Hippolytus, a collection of rules for governing Church life at Rome, or, it may be, in Egypt, and dating probably from the third century, say that men are to go to church every day that there are prayers, but only mention an evening service in the form of an occasional love feast or vigil.[3] The one clear piece of evidence that we have from the ante-Nicene period is that of the hymn, "Hail, gladdening Light," which is at least as old as the third century, for this hymn, mentioned by St. Basil as already very old in the fourth century,[4] which still forms part of the Evening Office of the Eastern Church, which was incorporated by Bishop Andrewes into his "Devotions," translated by Keble in the "Lyra Apostolica,"[5] paraphrased by Longfellow in his "Golden Legend," and has found its way into almost all our hymnals[6]

[1] "Epist.," bk. x. 96.

[2] Cp. S. Bäumer, "Histoire du Bréviaire," Fr. tr. by R. Biron. Letouzey et Ané. Paris. 1905. Vol. i. p. 62. Many of the other passages referred to below can be found quoted in this work. See also F. Cabrol, "Dictionnaire d'Archéologie et de Liturgie Chrétienne," art. "Brêviaire."

[3] Canons 226—232, 164—168, 111, 255, in the Latin translation at the end of Duchesne's "Origines du Culte Chrétien."

[4] "De Spiritu," ch. xxix. 73. Migne "P.G." xxxii. 205.

[5] No. lxiii.

[6] A. & M. No. 18. Another version in the English Hymnal, No. 269.

was certainly sung by men united in common worship.

But evidence from the times of persecution tells us little, for men could not then do freely what their instincts told them to do. With the conversion of Constantine there was more room for spontaneous development of Christian life, and in the fourth century we find the custom of daily morning and evening prayer well established.

Thus Eusebius, the historian, says that "through all the world in the churches of God, in the morning at the rising of the sun, and at the evening hour, hymns, praises, and sacred songs are offered to God."[7] Epiphanius (315—403) "mentions morning hymns and prayers and evening hymns and psalms, but none other."[8] The old Bishop, Zeno of Majuma, who lived to be nearly a hundred years old, never, so Sozomen tells us,[9] missed morning or evening service or any other liturgy unless he was ill, until the day of his death, in A.D. 380, while in the big centres of civilization at Antioch and Constantinople we find Chrysostom assuming that his hearers will know certain psalms, since they were sung morning and evening in the daily services,[10] and improving the attendance at church by organizing the singing, since the people were specially keen at the morning and evening hymns.[11]

Similarly, in the West, we find Monica, the mother of Augustine, going regularly to church morning and evening without missing a day;[12] and Augustine himself tells us how once in Africa the singing of

[7] In Ps. lxiv. "P.G.," xxiii. 639.

[8] Bingham's "Antiquities of the Christian Church," xiii. 9, 8; Vol. iv. p. 545, quoting Epiphanius, "Adv. Hæres.," iii. 23. "P.G.," xlii. 829. Cp. Baümer, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

[9] "H.E.," vii. 28. "P.G.," lxvii. 1504—5.

[10] In Ps. cxl. "P.G.," lv. 426. Cp. Hom. xviii. 5 in Act Apost. "P.G.," lx. 147; Hom. vi. in 1 Tim. ii. 1. "P.G.," lxi. 530, and in Ps. cxxxiii. 2. "P.G.," lv. 386.

[11] Sozomen, "H.E.," viii. 7 and 8. "P.G.," lxvii. 1335.

[12] "Confessions," bk. v. 9.

some devout ladies drove the devils out of a possessed young man who had been brought to the church.[13] Even among the monks of Egypt, where, as Cassian tells us, the older customs lingered, "except for their meeting for vespers and nocturns, there was no public office during the day." The fourth-century collection of rules known as the Apostolic Constitutions tells the people to "meet together every day, morning and evening," and not to "scatter the flock by staying away."[14] Hilary of Poitiers (c. 355) also tried the plan of increasing attendance by music and hymns morning and evening, though he found the people of Gaul very difficult to teach;[15] and the last acts of Paulinus of Nola (431) were to call his priests round him to say matins, and, after a day passed in slumber, to wake up at the hour of evening prayer to say his final words of praise.[16] Finally, the Emperor Justinian, in the year 529, ordered all the clergy to "sing the night office and also vespers," for, he said, "if numbers of laymen flock to church and show themselves zealous for the psalmody, it is indecent for the clergy, who are ordained for that very duty, not to perform it."[17]

II.

Services twice a day, then, were common in the Early Church, but from the beginning more frequent worship was often urged as the ideal.

[13] "De Civ. Dei.," xxii. 8.
[14] Bk. ii. 59. 1. "P.G.," i. 742.
[15] "In hymnorum carmine indociles." In Ps. lxiv. "P.L.," ix. 420, and Jerome, De Script Eccles 100, etc.
[16] "Epistola Uranii Presbyteri," iv. "P.L.," liii. 861.
[17] Cod. Just., i. 3. 41, quoted Baümer, p. 226. See also P. Batiffol, "Histoire du Bréviaire Romain," Eng. tr. A. M. Y. Baylay (Longmans, 1912), page 24: "Si enim multi laicorum, et suæ animæ consulant, ad sanctissimas ecclesias confluentes, studiosos circa psalmodiam se ostendunt, quomodo non fuerit indecens clericos ad id ordinatos non implere munus suum."

There were three public sacrifices in the Temple at Jerusalem. Daniel prayed three times a day looking towards the Holy City.[18] The Apostles went to the temple at the ninth hour because it was the hour of prayer.[19] St. Peter went up to the housetop to pray at the sixth hour.[20] With the destruction of Jerusalem the three corresponding services were held in the synagogues, and in them the Jews were said to curse the Christians three times a day.[21]

The writer of the "Didache," after repeating the Lord's Prayer, adds, "Pray thus three times a day,"[22] and he is only the first (if he is the first) of many who say the same. Clement of Alexandria,[23] Origen,[24] Tertullian,[25] and Cyprian,[26] urge prayer at the third, sixth, and ninth hours, associating them severally with the descent of the Holy Spirit and the events of our Lord's Passion.

Thus by the third century there were at least five recognized hours of prayer, and the number gradually increased. Chrysostom urges men to pray three times a day and to go to church to do so. "It is not as difficult," he says, "as business men think, but if they are really nailed down in the law courts they can pray privately";[27] it is not only the sermon that we go to church for, he argues, common prayer helps and strengthens devotion.[28] At Milan Ambrose wrote hymns for the different hours of the day which were clearly meant for popular use,

[18] Daniel vi. 10.
[19] Acts iii. 1.
[20] Acts x. 9.
[21] Bingham, "Antiquities," bk. i., ch. ii. § 1 (Vol. i. p. 13), who quotes Epiphanius, "Hær," xxix. and Jerome in Isaiah xlix. 5. 178.
[22] Ch. viii.
[23] "Strom.," vii. 7; "P.G.," ix. 455. Cf. "Dict. Christian Antiquities," Vol. i. p. 794, art. "Hours of Prayer."
[24] "De Orat.," xii. "P.G.," xi. 451—4.
[25] "De Orat.," 23—25. "P.L.," i. 1191—3.
[26] "De Dominica Oratione," 35. "P.L.," iv. 542.
[27] "De Anna," 4. "P.G.," liv. 667.
[28] Hom. iii., "Anti Anom." "P.G.," xlviii. 725.

and Augustine, busy as he was, clearly knew them by heart.[29]

If Chrysostom was only partially successful at Antioch and Constantinople, where people who had to be earning their living could not come oftener, the case was different at Jerusalem, where pilgrims came who had nothing else to do. We know what took place there at the end of the fourth century from the diary of a lady generally known as Sylvia, who "did" the Holy Places in the spirit of a most systematic and determined sightseer. She tells how the frequent services were attended not only by men and women who devoted their lives to religious observances, the *monazontes and parthenæ*, but also by lay people, and how in Holy Week the pilgrims went to continual services till all but the youngest and strongest were quite exhausted.[30]

But it was chiefly in the monasteries that the elaboration of common worship took place. The rule of Pachomius (348) ordered three reunions for psalmody and prayer daily. The monks were not to dawdle round the fire in cold weather and come late, nor were they to talk during the service.[31] Cassian tells us that the Egyptian monks were peculiar in meeting only twice a day, that in Palestine and Mesopotamia terce, sext, and none were said regularly, and that to these prime had been added within his own recollection, because the monks used to go to bed again after matins.[32] Basil ordered and elaborated the whole form of service in Cappadocia, and settled the complete cycle of offices as eight in number.[33]

[29] Paulinus, "Vita, S. Ambrosii," xiv. "P.L.," xiv. 31. Augustine, "Confessions," ix. 12, 32.

[30] In Duchesne's "Christian Worship," 3rd English edition, pp. 457—8, 555, 564—6.

[31] "Vita, S. Pachomii," 22. "P.L.," lxxiii. 243.

[32] "De Cænob. Instit," iii. 3. "P.L.," xlix. 112—6 and 126—132. Cf. Bäumer, pp. 106, 110, 136—150.

[33] "Reg. Fus. Tract." Resp. ad quæst. xxxvii. 3. "P.G.," xxxi. 1013.

The monastic ideal had great influence with many of the Fathers and with a large section of the people. Cæsarius of Arles in the sixth century encouraged the secular clergy to celebrate the services for the lesser hours in public every day, and instituted congregational singing to stop the people talking at the morning and evening services, to which they already came in large numbers.[34] In some quarters an attempt was made to increase the number of hours of prayer still further. Among the Spanish monks services were held, or at least ordered to be held, at each hour of the day,[35] and in some places, as in the monastery at Agaune in Valais, the idea of perpetual praise was carried out literally, and nine relays of monks kept up the chanting of the Psalms day and night without intermission, a custom already practised in certain monasteries in the East.[36]

But the chief influence was that of Benedict and his arrangement for the recitation of the psalter.[37] Whether his rule merely popularized the customs already obtaining at Rome, or whether the Roman Breviary was the outcome of his reforms, matters little. In either case the elaboration of the regular recitation of the psalter at seven, or rather eight, hours of prayer was monastic in origin and is still the official form of daily prayer obligatory of all priests in the Roman Catholic Church.

A similar tendency to multiply times of prayer can be traced in the popular devotions of the Middle Ages. The saying of the Ave Maria at curfew time

[34] Hom. xxxiv., quoted in Bingham's "Antiquities," bk. xiv. ch. 4, § 30 (Vol. v. p. 183).

[35] W. C. Bishop, "The Mozarabic Breviary," *Church Quarterly Review*, April, 1911.

[36] F. Cabrol, "Dictionnaire d'Archéologie et de Liturgie Chrétienne," arts. "Agaune, Acémètes," Vol. i. col. 858. See also for the *laus perennis* at the Monastery of the Studium, W. K. Lowther Clarke, "St. Basil the Great" (Cambridge, 1913). Cf. also "Dict. Christian Ant., art. "Acemetæ." Bäumer p. 221.

[37] Regula. VIII.—XVIII.

in the thirteenth century was first extended to the morning, and in the fourteenth to midday, and the devotion known as the Angelus had taken its present form by the sixteenth.[38] For some time after the beginning of the Reformation three services were kept up in our cathedrals and in some of the larger parish churches.[39] Cosin's private devotions were "digested into canonical hours," and introduced for a time into Peterhouse Chapel.[40] Laud defended himself from the charge that his "prayers were in canonical hours" by hoping it was no sin to do as did the prophet David.[41] Ken wrote three hymns for morning, noon, and evening, for the scholars of Winchester, and in the eighteenth century William Law, in his "Serious Call," recommended prayer five times daily, and urged that it should include the singing of psalms, no matter whether the worshipper "wants a voice or an ear to sing."[42]

We see, then, that, if the ordinary custom has been for men to come to church twice a day, there has also been a continuous sense that something more was needed. Generally this has been met by private prayer at other times, but preachers have continually tried to make this public, and with at least a measure of success, and that in monastic communities this instinct has elaborated the seven formal hours of prayer with their set services and particular ceremonial.

[38] V. Thalhofer, "Handbuch der Katholischen Liturgik," Zweite völlig umgearbeitete und vervollständigte Auflage von Dr. L. Eisenhofer (Freiburg, 1912), b. ii. s. 309.

[39] Several instances are collected by Vernon Staley in "Hierurgia Anglicana," Part III. pp. 229—242. The Library of Liturgiology and Ecclesiology for English Readers. De la More Press, 1904.

[40] Canterburies Doom, p. 208.

[41] Works, in the Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology, Vol. iii. pp. 1—43, and Vol. iv. p. 203. "History of the Troubles and Trials of Archbishop Laud," §314.

[42] Ch. xv. "Of chanting or singing the Psalms in our private devotions."

III.

But in spite of constant exhortation, this measure of success has been very small, and though the idea of observing the seven hours of prayer was acquiesced in, in practice it has seldom been carried out. The instinct that twice a day is the natural rate of frequency with which men should meet for public prayer has continually reasserted itself.

Among the Jews the afternoon service was shorter, and it was the two other temple services that loomed largest in the imagination of the people. To-day, and the custom is no new one, the Mincha and Ma'arib are usually run together.[43] Julian the Apostate, who had seen what the Christians did, and "laboured to introduce like rules and discipline among the idol priests," urged prayer "three times a day, or at least morning and evening."[44] At Jerusalem, it is clear from the diary of Sylvia that, whatever pilgrims or ascetics did, the rest of the people, as well as the priests and deacons, only went as a rule to morning and evening prayer.[45] Chrysostom's insistence on the value of observing the day hours in church shows that the custom had not established itself, though his allusions to the morning and evening services assume that these formed a recognized and familiar institution.

But it is, perhaps, in the records of the Councils that we see most clearly what men actually did. Meetings for business tell us more of what is going on than the exhortations of preachers or the literary compositions of authors. Many will vote who cannot speak or write, and evidently there was a tendency in some quarters to impose monastic customs on people which was resisted by a whole series of

[43] W. O. E. Oesterley and G. H. Box, "The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue," 2nd ed., 1911, p. 345.
[44] Bingham, "Antiquities," bk. vi. ch. 5, §9 (Vol. ii. p. 312).
[45] Baümer, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

synods, especially in Spain, where the daily service long maintained its independent and popular character.[46] The Mozarabic Breviary seems to be a fusion of two distinct rites; one, no doubt the original, much simpler and without the lesser hours, and another with separate monastic services for each hour of the day.[47] In the Ambrosian Breviary the day hours do not seem to form part of the original scheme; even in the Roman the two purely monastic services of prime and compline are easily distinguishable from the older stock.[48]

The monastic ideal imposed itself on the popular service, but even among the monks themselves, no sooner had the seven hours of prayer been elaborated than their observation began to break down. To this day the Carthusians, as a rule, only come to church for matins and vespers. The other offices they say privately in their cells.[49] Matins and lauds were soon run into one.[50] The eighth-century ritualists tell us how vespers and matins were already said as one service over night.[51] In the eleventh century the clergy are warned not to recite the whole series of offices for the day at one time, just because they want to be free to go about their business;[52] and the modern Roman Breviary, in its rubrics, contemplates the uniting of vespers, compline, matins, lauds, and prime as a normal and ordinary course of procedure.

[46] Baümer, *op. cit.*, pp. 219—226, 275—277, 349.
[47] W. C. Bishop, "The Mozarabic Breviary," *Church Quarterly Review*, April, 1911.
[48] W. C. Bishop, "The Prayer-Book Dictionary," art. "Ante-Communion Service," p. 28.
[49] "Consuetudines," xxix. 6. "P.L.," cliii. 701, quoted in F. Cabrol, "Dictionnaire," art. "Chartreux," col. 1051.
[50] Batiffol, *op. cit.*, p. 83, quoting Amalarius, "De Ord. Antiph.," 4.
[51] Baümer, *op. cit.*, p. 277, quoting the canon of the Council of the Synod of Emerita held in 666. Batiffol, *op. cit.*, p. 151.
[52] Batiffol, *op. cit.*, p. 132, quoting St. Peter Damian, "Opusc." xxxiv. 5.

In fact, the attempt had broken down even for those who, separated from the world, could order their day as they chose. Luther saw this, and wished to retain two daily services,[53] but his reforms were not carried out in the spirit that made this permanently possible, though the old choir offices lingered on in various forms for many years. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Cranmer noted that "the custom of praying seven times a day has long since ceased, and we now assemble only twice a day for prayer,"[54] so, with a true Catholic and liturgical instinct, for which we cannot be too grateful, he boldly recast the daily offices for us, bringing them back to their original and natural times.

Even though after the Reformation three services a day were, as we saw, kept up in our cathedrals, the two morning services seem to have been attended by different sets of people. Even so they were kept up only with great difficulty. Heylin complains, in 1637, that at Lincoln the people had "become too slothful to go to church both times in the forenoon, so the two were done by accumulation,"[55] and the frequent complaints of "the longsomeness of the service," that we meet with, seem to show that the custom had long become general. Even as late as 1730 the members of Christ Church went to matins at six and the litany at nine,[56] but it was the double course of service that struck the popular

[53] Rietschel, "Lehrbuch der Liturgik," b. i. s. 171, 442.

[54] Cranmer's "Liturgical Projects," ed. J. Wickham Legg, Henry Bradshaw Society, 1915, p. 22: "quum mos ille septies in die orandi jam pridem in ecclesia exoleuerit soleamusque nunc ~~vestantum~~ in die ad preces convenire." See also Gasquet and Bishop's "Edward VI. and the Book of Common Prayer," p. 376, and Proctor and Frere, "New History of the Book of Common Prayer," p. 34.

[55] "Antidotum Lincolniense," Pt. iii. ch. x. p. 61, quoted in "Hierurgia Anglicana," Pt. iii. p. 232.

[56] *Ibid.*, p. 236.

imagination in Dean Aldrich's catch, "The Bonny Christ Church Bells.":

> "The first and second bell
> That every day at four and ten cry,
> 'Come, come, come to prayers.'"

And the verger has "trooped before the Dean" twice every day since up to the present time. George Herbert, as Walton tells us, used "to appear constantly with his wife and three nieces and his whole family every day at the Church prayers in the chapel, at the canonical hours of ten and four"; and at the great revival of Church life after the Restoration, many of the churches in London and elsewhere had daily services twice, or four times where there were both people of leisure and people of business to be served: the former came at ten and three, the latter at six and eight.[57]

Moreover, present-day experience seems to point in the same direction. In the Roman Church, where the altar is the local centre of the people's devotion, they go to mass in the morning and a congregation gathers in the evening to say the rosary and sometimes also for Benediction. The churches are often locked at midday. In our own Communion the ordinary devout English Churchman, who usually goes to church twice on Sunday, feels it natural, when he has been at an early service, to stay at home either in the morning or in the evening.

IV.

If, then, it is a sound conclusion from the witness of history to say that the custom of public prayer twice a day answers a natural and permanent instinct of human nature, it is a fact of great importance. To recognize it will help us to meet the needs of

[57] J. H. Overton, "Life in the English Church, 1660—1714," p. 173, ff; "Hierurgia Anglicana," pp. 229—242; J. Wickham Legg, "English Church Life from the Restoration to the Tractarian Movement," ch. iv. pp. 77—107.

men, and will prevent us wasting our efforts in wrong directions, or even making serious mistakes.

In many of our town parishes there is a daily celebration of the Eucharist. This ought not by the rubric to interfere with the due recitation of the choir office: as a matter of fact, it does, and here is an explanation why it must and will, unless, indeed, there is a much larger staff of clergy and a greater number of worshippers than at present is the case in most of our parishes.

Again, it is frequently urged that City churches should be used for dinner-hour services. They are often so used for sermons, and with great success. But sermons are not services. It would seem that it is not really natural to pray in common at midday. At most, the churches are required at that time for the private devotion of a few. The experience of history and of psychology tells us that they should be open before and after the day's work, and that only then can daily services hope to be maintained. The same applies to our cathedrals. Early morning and the end of the working day are the times when men have so associated in the past, and if our diocesan churches are to become again the homes of the people's prayers, the services must be at nine in the morning at latest, and six in the evening at the earliest.

Again, the rise of community life in the Church of England has been of immense value, but it would seem as if a serious mistake had been made by them in attempting to revive the seven hours of prayer. The burden imposed on foreign communities by a false tradition, and hard for them to reform, has been copied and taken up by our English orders. It will be remembered that this was one of the points on which the greater part of the Community at Caldey seceded. The Bishop of Oxford was, no doubt, quite right in insisting on the use of the English Office as a matter of obedience, but he

was still more liturgically right in bidding them follow the more Catholic usage of the Book of Common Prayer.

The adoption of the seven hours of prayer by our communities seems to have been unfortunate in another way, in that it has prevented the development of our Office that they might have effected had they realized that it is the enrichment, and not the mere multiplication of services that a sound liturgical sense would prompt. The cathedrals have done something to maintain a high standard of dignity, but such enrichment of the Office as they have attempted has been almost entirely in the development of choral music. Dignity and music are not all that is wanted. The stronger spiritual sense of these communities might have done so much in other directions. Those who have now to say the Office every day, while thankful that we are free from the burden of the Mediæval Breviary, feel the inadequacy of our form, its rigidity and its poverty. What we want is such enrichment as will leave the present Office unaltered in structure; enrichment that can be omitted if necessary in private recitation or in ordinary parish churches, but such as could be added without changing the structure of our present matins and evensong, so that the main lines would remain familiar and adapted for the people's part in public worship, while the added variable parts could be elaborated in big churches by the choir, in community chapels, on festivals, in Holy Week, or on any special occasions.

Finally, history shows us that it is in accordance with human nature to pray in common twice a day. But the continued attempts to increase the observance, and their partial success, show that the general rule does not apply universally. There is a certain minority for whom a slightly more frequent devotion seems equally natural. Therefore there will always be a certain need for a little more, for

three services on Sunday, for midday services in certain places, for opportunities for private prayer, for additional customs of semi-public observance. If these are ignored, the life of the Church will suffer. The problem is one for careful observation and for reverent experiment.

(Reprinted, by permission, from "The English Church Review," Dec., 1916.)

"COMING IN LATE."

PEOPLE who are fond of giving us good advice lay great stress on "being in time for church." Notices are put up in our church porches asking those who arrive late to wait outside till the Psalms begin, "so as not to disturb the congregation," or non-seat-holders are told that "all seats are free when the bell stops," the implication being that pew-renters forfeit their claim if they are not in possession when the service begins. Are we right in laying such stress on punctuality? Is it natural for people to time themselves so to the minute? Is it advisable to try to make them do so? What are the practical results of our efforts?

It is doubtful if people have ever been so punctual. Almost our earliest description of Christian worship, that of the second-century apologist Justin Martyr, describes how before the Bishop's sermon they read "the memoirs of the Apostles, and the writings of the Prophets as long as time permitted."[1] It is possible that the Bishop was not always punctual, but it is more probable that the time during which the people were assembling was indeterminate, some coming earlier and some later, and had therefore to be filled up with something till all were assembled. The first part of the service had to be left more or less unfixed to allow for this freedom.

This is borne out by a third-century manual of instruction known as the Syriac "Didascalia."[2] Among its directions it orders where the Bishop and priests are to sit in church, and says that one deacon must help at the altar, whilst another stands

[1] "Apology," ch. 67. [2] Bk. II. ch. 57, § 4.

at the door to watch those who come in, to direct them to their proper places, and to see that when there they behave properly. Evidently many came in after the first part of the service had begun. This is made clear by a work which brought the directions up to date a hundred years later, the "Apostolic Constitutions."[3] It describes how the psalms are to be sung, and how the people are to join in, how there is to be a series of lessons ending up with the Epistle and Gospel. The deacons are to see that people do not hang about the door. If during the reading or singing, an ecclesiastic comes, with a commendatory letter, the service is not to be interrupted; the deacons must look after him, and they must do the same for a poor man or woman; but after the more solemn part of the service has begun, from which the catechumens are excluded, no one, not even one of the faithful, is to be admitted.

About the same time a lady, generally known as Sylvia, visited Jerusalem, and described the crowded services in which she and her fellow-pilgrims took part. The visitors to the city had come on purpose to attend the ceremonies, so there was no temptation to them to come late. Indeed, it is remarked that they came as early as the ascetics, the monks and virgins, for the vigils and preparatory parts of the services, which consisted of psalms with antiphons and hymns. The Bishop did not come to these. He was summoned when it was time for the sermon, or for the intercessions and dismissals. The first part was merely preparatory, the whole staff of clergy even was not obliged to be present. It was framed on the same lines as the Mass of the Catechumens. The singing and reading, which filled up the time while the congregation were gathering together, had now become a regular set form of service, but the people could apparently drop in at any time before it was finished.

[3] Bk. II. ch. 57, §§ 4 ff., and Bk. VIII. ch. 11, § 11.

So, in later years, the prayer said when the people were fully assembled was called the Collect. Even if, as Duchesne argues,[4] the origin of the name is to be found in the custom of the people to meet at another church, and to go from it in procession to the place where there was a station and the Mass was to be celebrated, it was soon applied to the prayer with which we are familiar, as said just before the Epistle and Gospel. It was said " over the collected people," though it was not the first word of the service. In the Ambrosian Liturgy it is still called " the prayer over the people." It is, to this day, prefaced in the Roman Liturgy by the salutation, " The Lord be with you," with which the Bishop or celebrant greeted the congregation as he came in.[5] In modern times the Gospel has come to be regarded as the beginning of the essential part of the liturgy, while the introits, now cut down to single verses of the psalms with an antiphon, the Kyries, and Gloria in Excelsis, represent the psalms and litanies of varying length with which the time was occupied while the people were gathering together.

This, of course, was before the days when clocks made possible the punctuality that we think so desirable, but it is doubtful if even after the Reformation the idea of " being in time " obtained universally. George Herbert says that the *Countrey Parson*[6] is to admonish the " nobility and gentry of the parish," and, if they do not mend their ways, to present such as " make it a piece of state not to come at the beginning of service with their poorer

[4] " Christian Worship " (Eng. Trans., S.P.C.K.), p. 167, note. Cp. Adrian Fortescue, " The Mass " (Longmans' " Westminster Library "), p. 244. For another derivation, see Procter and Frere, " A New History of the Book of Common Prayer " (Macmillan), p. 524; Bingham, " Antiquities," xv. 1—4, Vol. v. p. 227.

[5] Cp. Thalhofer, " Handbuch der Katholischen Liturgik," B. ii. p. 63, note.

[6] Ch. VI.

neighbours, but at mid-prayers"; and though this action of theirs seems rather to be due to a deliberate intention of slighting the liturgy in contrast with the sermon, they could hardly have done so if exact punctuality had been the general custom. Samuel Pepys seems to have been able to walk about London on Sunday and drop into different churches without exciting remark or thinking excuse necessary. Dr. Johnson has frequent entries in his diary: "I came in at the Psalms and could not well hear"; "I came in both times at the Second Lesson, not hearing the bell."[7] No doubt he did not think this satisfactory, but he does not seem to have thought it too late to go in as the service was so far advanced.

In fact, wherever action is free and spontaneous we find the same phenomenon. It is universal in Roman churches abroad, and the freedom of movement in them strikes us at once as right, whether we are impressed with it in the course of foreign travel, as Newman was on his first visit to Milan,[8] whether we read of it in an artistic piece of imaginative writing, such as the description of John Inglesant's visit to the Church of St. John Lateran, on Ash Wednesday,[9] or whether we witness it in our own St. Paul's Cathedral. It seems natural when we find it in a scene in a Russian novelist describing the church gradually filling while the deacon chants behind the iconostasis,[10] when we find people going in and out of a Salvation Army meeting, or see women dropping into a Mothers' Meeting one by one, as they have finished their day's work. It is part of the reason of the superior attraction of music-halls and picture palaces to that of the theatre. Even in our own Church, when we make

[7] "Prayer and Meditations," April 7, 1765, Mar. 28, 1766. See also April 22, 1764, and April 14, 1770.

[8] See his "Life," by Wilfred Ward (Longmans), Vol. i. p. 139.

[9] Ch. xxxi.

[10] Cp. Turgenev's "House of Gentlefolk," ch. 44.

new departures, such as special services for men, we find it necessary to have a hymn to fill up the time while they are coming in, just as the Early Church sang the psalms and antiphons, which developed into the Mass of the Catechumens.

If this be so, in our insistence on rigid punctuality we are fighting against human nature to our great loss. This does not mean that the service itself should begin unpunctually. For this there is no excuse. The clergy must be in their places to say the first word at the stroke of the clock. But the congregation must be allowed some latitude. As it is, people often stay away if late, because they think they must not come in after the service has begun, and soon they learn to stay away altogether.

Moreover, with the idea of greater latitude, and with the feeling of being at home in church, and being allowed to do as we like, comes the corresponding idea that we may come to the church well before the service begins. Our churches will be opened in good time, and not (as is so often the case, especially at early and weekday services) just at the last minute. People, especially youths in their teens, will perhaps get out of the habit of lounging about at the door till the bell stops, a habit which needs very little to make them stay outside altogether. Choirmen coming to a practice after the Friday evening service will not think it necessary to wait outside in the cold and wet, every now and then peering through the door to see if the service is nearly ended, but will come in and join in the prayers of the rest of the Christian folk. When people feel themselves free to come in late, they generally, as a matter of fact, get into the habit of coming early, and so getting in good time for the service. We need not, then, try to break down our conventionality by coming late on purpose, but if we are late we need not hesitate to come in, and we may do much in encouraging people to come early, either

by prefacing our Solemn Eucharist by a simple Matins (a service built up, in part at least, to meet the needs of gathering congregations), or by prefacing Evensong by the Litany (liturgically, perhaps, incorrect, but a good practical plan), by the provision of music, organ-playing, or even hymn-singing. In doing so we shall be consulting human nature, and following the example of the Early Church.

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THE NATURAL VOICE.

THERE is a very widespread dissatisfaction to-day with the state of our Church Music. This is felt not only by musicians, and in respect to the higher branches of the art, but no less by the mass of the people, even if their dissatisfaction is not expressed in terms of musical criticism. Their complaint is about the fundamental song of the Church (for to them "music" means singing), about the simple use of the voice on which all the rest is based.

I.

On the one side they hear most extraordinary noises which are called "intoning." It seems to them (as indeed it generally is) unnatural and affected. They think of Tennyson's "snowy-banded, dilettante, delicate-handed priest" as a creature only slightly less odious than poor Maud's cad of a lover. They hear simple words contorted and mispronounced, and normal voices strangled in the throat.[1] Moreover, they find it impossible to join in the Creed and the prayers; the pitch is too high. The responses and the Amens are dragged out to such a length that they lose all meaning.

On the other side they hear an unseemly mumble which makes what is said quite inaudible; or else everything is uttered in a conversational tone as if the officiant were making a series of remarks of a quite casual nature to a friend, as though, to quote Mr. Spectator's correspondent, there were no "very great difference between reading a prayer and a

[1] Children also notice it. "What's that funny noise?" said the little son of a friend of mine when for the first time he went to church and heard the parson begin to intone.

gazette"[2]; and when the people join in, they do so not "gently and pausably" as George Herbert enjoined,[3] but "in a huddling and slubbering fashion" such as he forbad, and the result is that "confused murmur in the congregation" to which the Puritans took exception at the Savoy Conference in 1661,[4] just as it had been "utterly misliked" by those of Hooker's generation.[5]

[2] No. 147. "There is certainly a very great difference between the reading of a prayer and a gazette, which I beg of you to inform, a set of readers, who affect, forsooth, a certain gentleman-like familiarity of tone, and mend the language as they go on, crying, instead of 'pardoneth and absolveth,' 'pardons and absolves.' . . . This indifferency seems to me to arise from the endeavour of avoiding the imputation of cant and the false notion of it."

[3] *A Priest to the Temple, or the Country Parson*, ch. vi. "The Parson praying": "Every one, man and child, answering aloud both Amen, and all the other answers, which are on the clerk's and people's part to answer; which answers also are to be done, not in a huddling or slubbering fashion, gaping or scratching the head, or spitting even in the midst of their answer, but gently and pausably, thinking what they say."

[4] Cardwell's *History of Conferences*, p. 305 (Oxford, 1840), chapter vii. *Documents connected with the Conference at the Savoy.* V. The Exceptions against the Book of Common Prayer. "That the repetitions, and responsals of the clerk and people, and the alternate reading of psalms and hymns which cause a confused murmur in the congregation, whereby what is read is less intelligible, and therefore unedifying, may be omitted."

The Bishops replied that devotion "is apt to freeze or sleep, or flat in a long continued prayer or form: it is necessary therefore for the edifying of us therein to be often called upon and awakened by frequent Amens, to be excited and stirred up by mutual exultations, provocations, petitions, holy contentions and strivings. . . . For this purpose alternate reading repetitions and responsals are far better than a long tedious prayer" (p. 339).

[5] *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book V., ch. xxxvi.: "The people's custom to repeat anything after the minister they utterly mislike." Thomas Cartwright had objected that "not only the time is unprofitably wasted and a confused noise of the people, one speaking after another, caused, but an opinion bred in their heads that those only be prayers which they pronounce with their own mouths after the minister."

The remedy of the Puritans was to silence the people, to turn the Litany into one long prayer, to eliminate the responses as "short cuts and shreddings," and to lengthen the collects "to render them more sensible and affecting."[6] The common remedy to-day is nearly as bad. On all sides, in episcopal gatherings, in the daily press, in the publications of musical reformers, we find a demand for less intoning and a greater use of "the natural voice."

The supposed remedy will simply emphasise both the faults that are complained of. It will leave intoning unreformed, and as it goes from bad to worse, we shall be in danger of losing altogether that which has been restored to our services at the cost of so much pains and trouble. It will accentuate the contrast of "saying" and "singing," breaking up the sense of unity and continuity in our services, and bringing in grotesque and comic effects of sudden alterations in the use of the voice, which are recognised features of music-hall "humour," effective, no doubt, in a "comic song with 'Spoken' in it," such as Sloppy entertained Mrs. Betty Higden and the minders with,[7] but entirely out of place in Divine Worship.

It is our old trouble of not thinking things out, of not getting clear what we mean by the words we use. We have not asked ourselves what we mean by "natural."

For, obviously, it is not in the least natural to speak in a loud voice, in a large building, before a crowd of people, and in long-drawn-out, dignified sentences. And though, as Bishop Butler said of conversation, "it is of the very nature of it that the discourse be mutual,"[8] it is not of its nature that it should be by the measured versicle and response of

[6] Cardwell, *Conferences*, p. 430.

[7] Charles Dickens, *Our Mutual Friend*, Bk. IV., ch. xvi., "Persons and Things in General."

[8] Sermon IV., *Upon the Government of the Tongue.*

the Prayer Book any more than by the formal *stichomuthia* of Greek tragedy. This is a fact which is, of course, perfectly well known to actors, whose aim we all know is, as it were, to hold a mirror up to Nature. There is the same danger of rant, of tricks, of conventions on the stage as in church. "The beginner," writes Mr. Louis Calvert,

> "is often told by the director not to strain and shout, but to 'speak naturally,' and then when he does speak naturally, he is told that he cannot be heard. This is a baffling paradox, and one which everyone who takes up stage work is likely to meet sooner or later. As a matter of fact, the natural speaking voice is of little or no use on the stage, and neither is the shout. The secret of it is that a man should so train his voice that he has the range and the pitch that is necessary, but also the technique and the control which enable him to seem to speak naturally."[9]

It is a complaint against a modern school of actors that they despise voice production so that you cannot hear a word they say.

In other words you have to appear natural. You have to think of the effect on your audience. In real life it is natural for a roomful of people to be all talking together; on the stage it seems quite natural for them to talk one by one. "The business of art," say the authors of the Government Report on *The Teaching of English in England*,[10] "is not to be natural, but to seem so. It is not in fact natural that Macbeth should talk in blank verse. But when Shakespeare chooses he can make it seem quite natural." What is wanted in utterance is perfect correspondence with conditions. The balance of speech and occasion must be kept true. The natural voice that we want in church is the highly artificial product which comes from the exact raising

[9] *Problems of the Actor* (Simpkin, Marshall, 1919), p.43.
[10] § 298, p. 325.

of the scale of ordinary language to suit the particular need, but it must be produced so easily and spontaneously as to seem natural.

But there is a still deeper fault in the popular demand for "the natural voice." It implies a contrast of nature and art. "An opinion has long been prevalent," wrote Bacon, "that art is something different from nature and things artificial from things natural"[11]; and this opinion still prevails. People think that speaking is natural and singing something unnatural. The result is disastrous to both. Speech remains with the mass of men ugly and slovenly, indistinct because they will not trouble to move their lips, jerky because they will not exert themselves to fill their lungs, nasal because they are too slack to open their throats, unintelligent because they have never listened for, or practised, the variations of stress and pitch which give expression to pathos and emotion. And singing is regarded as an accomplishment. It becomes self-conscious and over-elaborated. It is the prerogative of a few. The words become inaudible or are even deliberately mispronounced. Wind is made to rhyme with "lined" and "fear" with "see'er." The result is that sensible English people remain content to be considered unmusical and think they cannot sing. All this is reproduced in church with, it is hardly too much to say, disaster to religion. "Church Music," wrote Jeremy Collier,

> "must have no voluntary Maggots, no military Tattoos, no light and galliardizing notes. Religious harmony must be moving but noble withall; grave, solemn, and seraphic; fit for a martyr to play and an angel to hear."[12]

[11] *De Augmentis Scientiarum*, Book II., ch. ii. *Cf.* Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*, Part I., Sec. xvi. "In brief all things are artificial; for Nature is the art of God."

[12] *Essays on Moral Subjects: Of Music*, quoted in J. H. Overton's *Life in the English Church*, 1660—1714 (Longmans, 1885), p. 187.

But we cannot pretend that we have either purged our service of what he objected to or attained his ideal, while the foolish saying of the philistine Cæsar "on the irregularity of tone in one who read before him": "Do you read or sing? If you sing, you sing very ill" is still quoted as a clever saying by would-be reformers to-day. Whereas the remedy, of course, is, first, to make our everyday speech artistic and musical: to rescue from misuse and degradation the fair forms and melodious cadences of our gentle English tongue, to see to it that each in its wide realm has that which gives the charm inherent in a voice clear-cut and sympathetic, to secure to all the power to express in words through subtle tones and by inflexions that ring true, the inner feelings and varied passions of the man within.

And we want to make singing natural; to bring music—for again be it said, for the mass of men music is song—into our daily life and into the life of all, to make it not a luxury, still less a mere accomplishment, a thing apart, but a thing that is woven into the warp of common duties and everyday tasks, piercing things else dead with inbreathed sense. But for this end the "Blest Pair of Sirens, Voice and Verse," must wed their divine sounds in church as well as outside.

II.

The prime remedy for the faults in our Church Music is to make our everyday English speech musical. Till we do this the false idea will remain that there is something essentially different between speaking and singing, that one is natural and the other artificial. Our singing and intoning will be unnatural and people will clamour for the "natural voice" in church, meaning thereby something ugly and inartistic.

We must begin our work on the basis of our

daily intercourse. We must always take trouble to speak our best. Dr. Johnson used to say, writes Boswell, " that he made it a constant rule to talk as well as he could, both as to sentiment and expression, by which means what had been originally effort became familiar and easy."[13] If we do this, good speech will be that which is natural to us. We shall realise how different shades of meaning can be conveyed by varying emphasis and intonation. We shall, in reading, learn how to get the full meaning out of what is written. By mastering the exact use of our organs, both those used for clear articulation and those for resonance and quality, we shall get the power of expressing fully just what we want to express. We shall learn in speech to play on our voices as on an instrument, and, having learned, shall do it naturally and without thinking of the process or attracting the attention of others to it. The clergy should, in the course of their training, study the elements of phonetics, read poetry in class, recite from a stage in a big room, and learn above all to speak with an open throat, and on the lower registers of the voice.

Then, having learned to use our voices, we should learn to restrain them in church. The clergy should learn first how to exert their vocal powers to the full, and then how to hold them back. This will give a feeling of naturalness and ease. They will find it unnecessary to shout if their voices are resonant and clear. They should learn to cut out of their voices when reading the Lessons, much of the personal character and pecularities that are permissible in the pulpit; to get rid, when saying the prayers, of much individual emphasis and interpretation that is in place when reading the Lessons. They should learn that you must go slower in unfamiliar passages, and in those that change from day to day, such as the Gospels and Lessons, while familiar unchanging parts

[13] Mar. 30, 1782.

can be read quite quickly wthout any suggestion of hurry or gabble if the articulation is distinct and the quality clear. They are leading the devotions of the people, and must therefore learn to speak in an even, impersonal voice, like good clear print, if they are not to seem unnatural, casual or eccentric.

But there is a further problem, that of Common Prayer. In common worship, individual differences are to be sunk and all are to unite like the souls Dante heard sing in Purgatory as with one voice.[14] Therefore the officiant has to get the congregation to do as he does. They need to learn to speak up as worshipping God, and to speak together as united in worship. They should say the words together with musical voices, all on one note. This will come quite naturally. If you listen you will find that an ordinary congregation, speaking together, will do so on low C, B, B flat, or even A. A Welsh congregation accustomed, as they are, to speak with a fuller tone, will take a slightly higher note. So will children, as can be heard in any school when they say the multiplication table together. The priest should therefore give the lead, pitching his voice a little lower, for their sakes, than he would naturally do if speaking out alone. The Amens similarly should be said as part of the prayer they follow. The priest should keep his voice even and the others will join in spontaneously. By dropping his voice as if the sentence ended with the words "world without end," he can easily reduce a whole congregation first to mumbling, and then to silence.

Further, the congregation must learn to keep together in rhythm as well as pitch. This they will

[14] *Purgatorio*, Canto xvi. 20.

"Una parola in tutti era ed un modo,
Si che parea tra esse ogni concordia,"
(through all the choir
One voice, one measure ran, that perfect seemed
The concord of their song.)

do of their own accord if the low note natural to their voices is taken, for there is a no less natural rhythm in every English sentence. False emphasis on wrong words, which choir boys are often taught at much pains to give under colour of "pronouncing your little words," will disappear. The priest must be careful not to cut in with his sentence before the congregation have finished theirs. He must suggest the right pace and give the lead in correct natural phrasing.

This, it will be found as a rule, will come quite spontaneously, especially if there are a few leaders in the congregation who understand, and are alert and attentive. If the priest's voice is too high pitched (and there are natural tenors), they must listen for the natural note of the congregation (generally about low B flat), and a slight emphasis on the note will bring them all together. A few will persistently continue to speak both out of tune and out of time, pitching their voices a little below the others, cutting in before them and gabbling or dragging on after the rest in spite of all you can do, sometimes upsetting the unison of a whole congregation, as a singer that drags the time or sings out of tune will upset a whole choir. Certain traditional tricks and mispronunciations may refuse to disappear. Congregations will often continue to say "WAS crucified" (implying that someone has just contradicted the fact), or "THE communion OF saints" (very common where there is high-pitched unnatural intoning), so a little explanation and, if possible, a few practices may be desirable. But once learned, the right way of speaking together on a natural low note will remain as the normal practice.

Then the congregation is ready to sing together. The transition can be made imperceptibly. They have been speaking musically; now they sing articulately. As they pass from saying the Lord's Prayer on low A to singing the response to "O Lord, open

thou our lips," there is no need for an organ to boom out a note. The priest just raises his voice a little in pitch and slightly emphasises the element of musical tone, singing the versicle on B flat or wherever may seem natural. The service is now being sung.

When once the transition is made there should be no going back. If the Psalms cannot be chanted it is perhaps better to keep to the low natural note of unison speaking. In old days, even up to the middle of the seventeenth century the Lessons were chanted,[15] but if that is not possible now, the same quality of speech should be used for the Venite and for the Psalms. To go back to a speaking voice in the Creed is an anti-climax. To say a Collect after singing the versicles and responses, or worse, for the priests to say a versicle or prayer and the choir to respond by chanting an Amen in an entirely different key, is to make a serious dislocation of emotional pitch.[16]

Then the inflexion of the responses can be added, corresponding as they do to the natural drop in our intonation at the end of our sentences. The natural phrasing should be preserved without any lengthening

[15] E. Cardwell, *History of Conferences*, p. 315. The Puritans objected at the Savoy Conference to the Rubric "In such places where they do sing, there shall the Lessons be sung, in a plain tune, and likewise the Epistle and Gospel," conceiving "that the distinct reading of them with an audible voice tends more to the edification of the church." To which the Bishops replied (p. 351): "The rubric directs only such singing as if after the manner of distinct reading, and we never heard of any inconvenience thereby, and therefore conceive this demand to be needless."

[16] Addison, *Spectator*, No. 29: "But however this Italian method of acting in recitativo might appear at first hearing, I cannot but think it more just than that which prevailed in our English opera before this innovation, the transition from air to recitative music being more natural than the passing from a song to plain and ordinary speaking, which was the common method in Purcell's operas."

of the final syllables. They should be sung without organ accompaniment, unless the organist can really restrain himself to accompany and not to drown. But as a rule the moment a congregation hears an organ it becomes artificial and begins to mispronounce and lay emphasis on wrong words. Old associations are too strong. The traditional unreality of phrasing even tends to return the moment the note is pitched too high; and G is too high for most men. F, the fifth above the natural B flat taken for the opening versicle, is as high as most men will sing. E or even E flat is far better. I have repeatedly found that men who can intone well on F, or with care on G, become hopelessly artificial and "parsonic" directly they try to intone on A. The last response before the Collect should, of course, not be sung slowly. It is the preparation for the prayer that follows.

From singing the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the responses, it is but one step to intoning the Collects with inflexions at the end of each period, and to singing the Sursum Corda and prefaces, the Litany and its refrains; and from this to the plainsong chanting of the Psalms is but one more.[17] People are afraid of the term Plainsong, and certainly in its more elaborate forms, and as frequently sung, it is hardly likely to become very popular. But for chanting of rhythmical prose like that of the Psalms, it is the most natural and suitable form of simple music. We Englishmen who have so easily recognized the place of recitative in Oratorio should

[17] Bingham speaks of the plain-song chanting of his day (1720), *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, Book XIV., ch. i., 15. "As to the voice or pronunciation used in singing, it was of two sorts, the plain song, and the more artificial and elaborate tuning of the voice to a greater variety of sounds and measures. The plain song was only with a little gentle inflection, and agreeable turn of the voice, with a proper accent, not much different from reading, and much resembling the musical way of reading the Psalms now in our cathedral churches."

find no difficulty in applying the principles of natural musical phrasing to liturgical common prayer.

Hear what Sir Edward Tylor, one of our most learned anthropologists says, basing his statements on a wide knowledge of mankind:

> "To read or recite poetry as we moderns do is to alter its nature, for the purpose of poetry was to be chanted. But this very chanting or singing grew out of talking. On listening carefully to the talk going on around us, we may observe that it does not run on in an unchanged monotone, but that all sentences are intoned to an imperfect tune, a rise and fall of pitch marking the phrases, distinguishing question and answer, and touching emphatic words with a musical accent. . . . When speech becomes solemn or impassioned it passes more and more into natural chanting, which at devotional meetings may be heard nearly passing into a distinct tune. The intoning in churches arose from the same natural utterance of religious feeling, but in course of time became fixed by custom, and was forced into the regular intervals of the musical scale. So the artificial recitative of the opera is a modern musical working up of what has come down by tradition of the ancient tragic declamation, which once swayed the listening throng of the Greek theatre."[18]

And hear what the great Saint Augustine[19] said, who endorsed what the great saint of Alexandria had ordered, and was in turn himself quoted by Rabanus Maurus and approved of by Hooker:

[18] *Anthropology* (Macmillan, 1881), chapter xii., "Arts of Pleasure," p. 290.

[19] *Confessions*, Book X., ch. xxxiii. 50. "Tutiusque mihi videtur quod de Alexandrino episcopo Athanasio saepe mihi dictum commemini, qui tam modico flexu vocis faciebat sonare lectorem psalmi, ut pronuntianti vicinior esset quam canenti." Quoted from Rabanus Maurus, *De Instit. Cleric.* ii., 48, by Hooker, *Eccles. Pol.* Book V., ch. xxxviii., 3. He, in turn, seems to have quoted it from Isidore of Seville, *De Eccl. Off.* v. 3.

"That seems to me the safer way which I remember has often been told me of Athanasius the Bishop of Alexandria, who made the reader of the psalms chant with just that slight inflexion of the voice that he seemed more like one speaking than singing *(ut pronuncianti vicinior esset quam canenti)*."

That is what we want—to make our speech more like song, and our song more like speech.

III.

The popular demand for the use of "the natural voice" in church by which too often is meant something unmusical and inartistic, is bound up with the popular belief that singing is something unnatural, and art something apart from daily life. It is not enough, therefore, to bring music into our speech; we want also to bring the naturalness of our every-day language into our ideas of song.

But here we are met at once by the immense forces of bad tradition. Directly people begin to try to sing, the idea that it is something unnatural makes them do all sorts of strange things. They tighten the muscles of their throats; they screw up their faces, and raise their eyebrows or else frown with all their might; they bring in all sorts of affectations of speech; they substitute wrong vowels because they are supposed to be more musical. They announce their intentions of singing songs of "Are-aby" and of "Chearrming" you to a "teee-rr," and even express their longing for "the touch of a varnished hand"!

The same thing happens too often when they sing in church. The bad tricks of the concert stage are introduced into the chancel, with the addition of a few that seem to be exclusively ecclesiastical. Little words are emphasized till you think that "ifs" and "ands" ARE something like pots and pans, they

ring out so. This was heard in the theatre in Addison's day, who says he was entertained with many a melodious "the,"[20] but it would seem to be only in church that men would sing about "THE forgiveness OF sins," or lengthen out the first (short) syllable of "Amen" and the second of "upon," till they are hardly recognisable as English words. Or else the idea seems to be that singing is something very difficult, and that unless you are quite an exceptional person you must be silent.[21]

Moreover this bad tradition is stereotyped in customs of choirs and organists. The unnatural head voice of boys is systematically developed. I have even heard a choir, the boys of which were made to sing all their vowels as near as possible to "oo" as being a more musical sound, so that at the end of each prayer they always sang "oo moo." Or the silence of the congregation leads organists to crash out the sounds of their loudest stops "to give support to the voices." Both faults come from the false idea that singing is something unnatural and that the mass of people cannot sing.[22]

[20] *Spectator*, No. 18. "I have known the word 'and' pursued through the whole gamut, have been entertained with many a melodious 'the,' and have heard the most beautiful graces, quavers, and divisions bestowed upon 'then,' 'for,' and 'from' to the eternal honour of our English particles."

[21] I have found among our students at King's College that about 80 per cent. can sing the service quite well, while of the remaining 20 per cent., ten can sing, but need more practice to keep in tune when singing alone, while the rest, I am convinced, could learn, though it would take some time, so unused are they to listening to the sounds they hear round them and to controlling the muscles of their throats. Of course these men have been exercising their voices both in reading and singing, and have been hearing others read and sing in Chapel during some six or more terms.

[22] Wesley was of opinion that everyone could sing. *Works*, Vol. viii., p. 306, quoted in Tyerman's *Life*, Vol. i., p. 398: "Suit the tune to the words. Avoid complex tunes which it is scarcely possible to sing with devotion.

The first step, then, is to bring back Church Music to the people. We must begin with the popular element, namely the hymn. We must get them out of the heavy, unintelligent, dragging, "note by note" singing that we so often hear. We must work to restore the sense of rhythm. We must stop the tiresome practice of singing *rallentando* at the end of each verse, as if the singing of four lines left us exhausted. This means that we must have congregational practices. Without them there is a deadlock. People do not like hymns they do not know. The hymns they know have grown stale.

Perhaps at first it will be as well to learn plenty of triple time tunes, which insist on being taken rhythmically. There are many fine compositions of the Eighteenth century which are full of flowing melody. Many of these are familiar in a debased form, such, for instance, as "Mt. Ephraim," the true form of which can be found in the *English Hymnal,* No. 196. Many of the Welsh tunes, too, insist on being sung with a feeling of movement. Then it will be well to get back our familiar old psalm tunes to their original form with long notes at the beginning and end of the lines. This will at once get life and variety into tunes such as, for instances, "O God, our Help in Ages past," which, I suppose, most of us have felt to be heavy and dead as usually sung.

Repeating the same words so often, especially while another repeats different words, shocks all common sense, necessarily brings in dead formality, and has no more religion than a Lancashire hornpipe. Sing no anthems. Do not suffer the people to sing too slow. . . . Let the women constantly sing their parts alone. Let no man sing with them unless he understands the notes he sings and sings the bass as it is pricked down in the book. Introduce no new tunes till they are perfect in the old. Let no organ be placed anywhere till proposed in the conference. Recommend our tune book everywhere, and if you cannot sing yourself, choose a person or two in each place to pitch the tune for you. Exhort everyone in the congregation to sing, not one in ten only."

Then we shall choose fine old tunes with strong melodies, German Chorales and Swiss Psalm-tunes. These will not be so popular at once. We have got so used to little trivial ballad-like tunes of four lines that at first they will seem difficult and heavy. But soon the greater variety of eight-line or irregular metres will begin to be felt, allowing, as they do, of stronger musical structure with phrase answering phrase. They will be found to wear well, and people will begin to be dissatisfied with the mere common measure hymn. Four verses at most, more often three, sometimes only two, will be found enough. The hymn will be then sung as a whole. Contrasts in singing between verse and verse will suggest themselves naturally. The second verse will, perhaps, be sung softly, or unaccompanied, according to the nature of the words. In Welsh hymns, and the Welsh have a certain feeling for hymnody that other nations often lack, few of the hymns have more than three verses, and many are single stanzas. If these are felt not to be enough, it is an old custom for them to repeat the last half of the final verse, and the usual structure of a Welsh hymn tune lends itself to this practice.

But four-line hymns, even in common measure, need not be discarded. When the congregation has learned to think of a hymn as a whole, and to care for tunes that do not merely depend on the colour of their harmony for their interest, these can be practised. But they are much harder to sing well, as almost the whole interpretation of them lies in the phrasing which it is difficult for a congregation to render together, and varies in each verse. All depends on an intelligent and quick appreciation of the meaning of the words. They will have to be read over together first. Line must succeed line without a pause when the sense requires it, and verse must follow verse. Great liberties will have to be taken with the time in single notes. We shall

know when the composition of the hymn as a whole has been grasped, as the tiresome *rallentando* at the end of each verse will disappear of itself, and people will cease to sing "Amen" indiscriminately at the end of every hymn, realizing that it alone has fitness after a doxology.

Congregational practices will clear the way for other reforms. Many thoughtful people are doubtful whether the introduction of boy choirs that we owe to the Oxford Movement was not, after all, a mistake. They were right and natural in our cathedrals where there were regular choir schools in which the daily services were part of the normal life of all, and undoubtedly the music of our great English School was written for boys' voices. But it does not follow that that music is at all suitable for parish and congregational worship. It is not certain that it is a good thing to work ordinary choir boys so hard as they are worked. Unsympathetic people say we are exploiting cheap labour, and it surely is a matter of grave concern that so much of the rendering of our services is entrusted to immature and generally uneducated children. At any rate, congregational practices will help to relieve the strain put upon them, and to restore the balance between what may be called "art" music rendered by a choir, and popular music sung by all.

It will also make it possible for the organ to be subdued. Organists are often unfairly blamed. Impossible things are expected of them. Frequently the only course open to them is to pull out the stops and drag the singers on, or to cover the deficiencies of the choir by noise. But it is none the less very distressing. The moment people begin to practice without an instrument, their voices improve in tone. They do not need to shout. They do not drag the time. They rely on themselves and on one another. As someone once said to me after such a practice, they begin to realise that they are

playing on their voices as on an instrument. Then the organist can confine himself to real accompanying. He can play as softly as he likes, and will find he can hardly play too softly. He can take his hand off the keys for a time. The congregation do not depend on him, and will continue to sing. This probably means having a conductor at services as well as at practices, but why not? It is found necessary in all great concert or opera work, and there is nothing irreverent in what conduces to more worthy worship. It also means a low pitch for our hymns as well as for our chants and responses.[23]

The hymns must be sung in unison at first, as must the liturgical part of the service. But when the congregation has learned to sing with rhythm and not note by note, there is no reason why they should not sing in harmony. But the same feeling for rhythm must be kept in the singing of the parts. For this purpose, good contrapuntally harmonised hymns should be chosen. The men should be encouraged to sit together, basses in one part and tenors in another. It is not only in Wales that people can sing in harmony, as those who have tried the experiment know. It only wants books with the music, and a few leaders. When practices are once established, several parishes could combine for what the Welsh call a *Cymanfa Ganu*, a good united hymn-singing of tunes already practised and learned.

Then from the congregation a choir could be selected—a choir of church people who put worship first. It would begin by just leading the rest. Then it might sing fauxbourdons to the hymns or harmonised settings to the alternate verses of the versicles. All kinds of skilled music might be

[23] Even in the *English Hymnal* most of the hymns are pitched too high for the ordinary congregation—at least for the men in it. We find it necessary at King's College to transpose half of them. There is a transposed edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern.*

rendered, and new forms developed. But this is another question. The point is that such music must develop out of the religious needs and customs of a worshipping people.

IV.

The question is urgent. The dulness and unattractiveness, what people vaguely call the "respectability," of our services is largely a question of music. Men are being alienated by the high pitch of our chanting, which prevents their joining in it, as well as by the "parsonic" voice it produces.

On the other hand, what an immense gain it will be if men can learn to realise the beauty of our mother tongue in daily life; what a help it will be in the interpretation of literature, what a satisfaction in the exercise of corporate speech! The Church will be providing a training in singing which will give a depth to worship and make it an activity of art, a thing of beauty. Men will sing praises with understanding when their true instincts are not thwarted and contradicted by false conventions belying the meaning of what is sung in the worship of God.

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